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# The Reading Teacher

THEME OF THIS ISSUE

Television and Reading

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# *The* Reading Teacher

Vol. 11, No. 1

October 1957

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THE READING TEACHER is published four times a year, October, December, February, and April, by the International Reading Association (I.R.A.). Headquarters: 5835 Kimbark Ave., Chicago 37, Illinois. Mailed to all members of the I.R.A. in good standing according to its constitution and by-laws. Available to non-members at a subscription of \$3.50 per year. Single copies \$1.25 each, 5-19 copies, \$1.00 each; 20 or more copies, 75c each. Copyright, 1957 by the International Reading Association, Inc. Second class mail privileges authorized at New York, N. Y.

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# What's Happening In Reading

by WILLIAM S. GRAY  
● THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

FOR MANY YEARS the question asked most frequently by teachers of reading related to the most effective methods of promoting accuracy and independence in word recognition. Whereas many questions still arise in this field the most persistent question today relates to the best plan for grouping pupils at different grade levels for purposes of reading instruction. Many different proposals are being made, varying all the way from the use of highly individualized teaching procedures to grouping on the basis of a composite of factors. Furthermore various plans are being tried out experimentally in different school systems. The interest in this topic is so widespread that several articles in the December number of THE READING TEACHER will be concerned with the basic issues involved in individual instruction and grouping.

## Attitude of the Press

The peak of the wave of criticisms by the Press of the teaching of reading seems to have passed. The number of critical articles has greatly decreased during the past year and the number of constructive proposals has increased. It is noteworthy that newspaper reports of professional meetings relating to reading are now high-lighting the really significant issues considered and proposals

made. This implies that the public and the Press have in general acquired greater confidence in the work of the schools and are viewing professional activities with an open mind. We should welcome this change in attitude wherever it exists and seek in every way possible to maintain and extend it. The explanation lies largely in the vigorous effort which has been made in schools during the last few years to improve their reading programs and the reading competence of their pupils. Some of the factors which have contributed to these ends are referred to in the paragraphs that follow.

## Attendance at Reading Conferences

According to Dr. Ralph Staiger, Mississippi Southern College, the past summer has been a banner one for reading conferences. Because of their diverse sponsorship no comprehensive compilation of the number held has been prepared. However, a questionnaire sent to 250 graduate schools by the National Conference on Research in English in September, 1956, revealed the fact that thirty-four were already planning conferences for the summer of 1957. Since then, twenty-one additional summer conferences have been reported to Dr. Staiger. The attendance has varied from two hun-

dred to fifteen hundred per conference. Conferences are thus serving thousands of teachers each summer.

During the school year an equal if not greater number of reading conferences are conducted under the auspices of national, state and regional associations. In this connection the International Reading Association, directly and through its councils, is very active. The analysis that follows of the activities of reading conferences was contributed by Dr. Staiger.

"As a rule, reading conferences have an in-service teacher-training orientation. Teachers come together from a wide area for several days to hear contributions from leaders in the field, to watch demonstrations of teaching techniques; to observe exhibits of recent textbooks, trade books and other instructional materials; and to discuss methods they have used with their colleagues. Oftentimes reading conferences are organized on a workshop basis. In such cases the conferees attack a series of challenging problems, identify the specific issues involved, share experiences in efforts to solve them and come to reasoned conclusions as a result of group thinking. To a very large extent teachers return to their classrooms with greater vitality, new ideas and increased determination to improve their reading programs and teaching procedures."

#### **Published Proceedings**

Some reading conferences greatly increase their audiences through published proceedings. For example,

whereas 2,000 people attended the 1956 annual meeting of the International Reading Association in Chicago, over 7,000 copies of the proceedings, *Better Reading for Our Times*, were published. Most of these copies have been sold. The following titles of recently published proceedings illustrate the variety of challenging problems which are considered yearly.

1. *Reading in Action*. Proceedings of the Second (1957) Annual Conference of the International Reading Association. Scholastic Magazine, 33 West 42nd St., New York City.

2. *Developing Permanent Interests in Reading*. The Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Reading Conference at the University of Chicago. University of Chicago Press, 1956.

3. *Organizing Reading Programs in Schools*. A Report of the Eleventh Annual Conference on Reading at the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1955.

4. *The Process of Making Discriminative Reactions*. Twenty-first Yearbook, Claremont Reading Conference, College Curriculum Laboratory, Claremont College, Claremont, Calif., 1956.

5. *Toward Independence in Reading*. Tenth Annual Conference. Kent State University Bulletin, Kent, Ohio, 1956.

6. *Techniques and Procedures in College and Adult Reading Programs*. Yearbook of the Southwest Reading Conference. Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 1957.

The published proceedings of reading conferences are being distributed annually to thousands of teachers, school officials, librarians, and various teacher-training agencies. They supplement the valuable content of professional books on reading by supplying teachers with up-to-the-minute discussions of trends and issues faced in improving reading. They are used not only individually by teachers in seeking guidance but also as essential aids in both the pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers.

#### Aids to Parents

Of great importance in the current effort to improve reading is the tremendous interest evidenced by parents in the methods used by schools in teaching reading and in ways they can cooperate in promoting desirable reading interests and habits among their children. Various explanations are possible. One which applies widely grows out of the fact that many parents are unable to meet the reading demands that modern life imposes on them. As a result hundreds of thousands of adults attend reading courses each year in the effort to improve their own reading ability. They are anxious that their children should be better prepared than they were to use reading as an aid to personal development and to increased civic and vocational efficiency.

One of the methods used by schools in satisfying the questions of parents and of increasing their ability to help their children in read-

ing is through personal and group conferences, demonstrations, study groups. A second method which has proved very helpful is through the publication of books which inform parents concerning the nature of reading, current methods of teaching pupils to read, and the role of parents in helping pupils grow both in and through reading. Examples of such publications follow:

1. *What Parents Can Do to Help Children in Reading*. Vol. I of the Proceedings of the Reading Conference of the University of Delaware. Newark, Delaware, 1950.

2. *Your Child Learns to Read* by A. Sterl Artley, Scott, Foresman and Co., 1953.

3. *Your Children Want to Read* by Ruth Tooze. Prentice Hall, Inc., 1957.

4. *The Proof of the Pudding* by Phyllis Fenner. John Day Publishing Co., 1957.

5. *Sailing Into Reading* by Nila Banton Smith, National Education Association, 1956.

6. *The Truth About Your Child's Reading* by Sam Duker and Thomas Nally. Crown Publishers, New York City, 1956.

The National Book Committee, Inc., recognizing the great need in this field has arranged for the preparation and publication of a parents' handbook on children's reading. This committee is an independent, non-profit-making citizens' group which was organized in 1954 "to keep books free, to make them widely available and to encourage people to read them." This



project had its origin in the conviction of the Committee that there is urgent need "for an attractive, informative guide written in popular style to help parents understand their role in their children's reading."

This book, which will probably be called *Your Child and His Reading: How Parents Can Help*, is now being prepared by Dr. Nancy Larrick, Education Director of Random House children's books and past-President of the International Reading Association. She is assisted in this task by a large group of consultants representing twenty-two national organizations interested in childhood and in parent education. According to present plans the book will be published this fall in a cloth-bound edition by Doubleday and Co., and in an inexpensive paper back edition by Pocket Books, Inc. It will be made widely accessible to parents through newsstands, bookstores and super markets on a non-profit basis.

### The Wonderful World of Books

One of the most gratifying results of recent efforts to improve reading is the growing interest of children in "the wonderful world of books". This trend has been greatly facilitated by the recent publication of simple uniquely illustrated books that have captured the imagination of children to an amazing extent. As an example of such material reference is made to the illustrated article by Robert Cahn, entitled "The Wonderful World of Dr. Seuss" which appeared in the July

6, 1957, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*. It describes the work of Theodore Geisel, alias Dr. Seuss, who for thirty years has been an apostle of "joyous nonsense" expressed through drawings and related text. As early as 1927 he created a cartoon and a slogan for an insecticide advertisement entitled, "Quick Henry, the Flit", which attained instant national recognition.

At the child level he has created "a modern mythology of bizarre creatures" which delights "millions of children". Examples are the Remarkable Foon, "who eats sizzling pebbles that fall off the moon" and Drum Tummied Snumm, "who can drum anytime that you might care to hum — doesn't hurt him a bit 'cause his drum tummy's numb". One of his creations, called "The Cat and the Hat" was written for six year olds to be read independently in a vocabulary of only 220 words. Dr. Geisel's annual output of picture books has become a very important part "of the basic children's literature of the country."

The foregoing discussion in the *Saturday Evening Post* is important for two reasons. It shows clearly that there are types of wholesome books that appeal strongly to children and that introduce them to the wonderful world of books. It familiarizes parents throughout the country with one kind of reading material that they may advisedly secure for their children. It also represents a type of constructive publicity by the press concerning read-

ing and reading materials that is greatly needed today.

### Children's Book Clubs

One of the vital aids in introducing children both to entertaining and informative books are the children's book clubs which have functioned effectively during recent years. A summary report concerning these clubs including their names, purposes and values appeared in the April, 1955, edition of *Junior Libraries*, which is a part of the *Library Journal*. It was prepared by Rhoda Kruse, Assistant Librarian, Girls' High School, Brooklyn. To illustrate the nature and extent of service rendered by such clubs, a description follows of the Weekly Reader Children's Book Club, which was prepared on request by C. W. Pettegrew, Director of the Club.

"The Weekly Reader Children's Book Club was started in the fall of 1953 by the publishers of MY WEEKLY READERS, CURRENT EVENTS, and other periodicals and textbooks. The firm's editors had become quite concerned about the inroads being made on wholesome home reading by too many comics and, often, too much TV. The aim of the new Children's Book Club was to provide an every-child program of home reading for fun at such low cost that practically every family could afford highly-rated juvenile literature — all current best sellers — on a year-around basis.

"A member of the Weekly Reader Children's Book Club receives a minimum of six books during a

membership year. The formal membership year begins in December; however, membership may be started at any time during the membership year and all previous selections are sent to bring the new membership up to date. When paid in advance, the membership fee is only \$6.00. Book selections are mailed in December, March, May, September and October.

"Each book is selected by a Selection Committee which includes Eleanor M. Johnson, Editor-in-Chief of My Weekly Readers, Chairman; Dr. Leland B. Jacobs, Professor of Education, Columbia University; and Dr. David C. McClelland, Professor of Psychology, Harvard University. Books are carefully selected to appeal to the reading abilities and interests of children, ages 8 to 12, and must meet high standards of literary quality and wholesome moral value. Membership last year was 300,000. It is expected that membership during the current year, 1957-58, will exceed 350,000."

In order to encourage the preparation of good books for children, grants were made to three well known writers' conferences held during the past summer. These grants established juvenile literature lectureships, fellowships, and prizes or grants-in-aid to conference participants. The recipients of the grants were Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Middlebury College, Vermont; Indiana University Writers' Conference; and New York City Writers' Conference, Wagner College. The

motives which prompted these grants were "to encourage authors and juveniles" and "to help widen the scope and quality of children's literature." Through such steps we may look forward hopefully to wider acquaintance among children with "the wonderful world of books" and rapid increase in the number of excellent books from which children may choose what they want to read.

### Reading Among Teen Agers

The effort to extend reading interests is just as vigorous among teen agers as among children from eight to twelve. This is very significant because the trend in the past has been for personal reading to decline rapidly during the high school period. Fortunately many steps are being taken to promote reading interests in both junior and senior high schools. Attention is directed here to the work of the Teen Age Book Club and the influence of paper-back books on reading among youth. The information that follows was supplied on request by William D. Boutwell, Director of the Teen Age Book Club, sponsored by Scholastic Magazines.

"In a brief space of twelve years junior and senior high school students have purchased through the Teen Age Book Club more than 20,000,000 paperback books. Other millions have been purchased through usual commercial channels. New York City students alone absorb about 300,000 paperbacks annually through their G.O. school stores.

"Teenagers take to paperbacks

for the same reason as their elders: the low price, bright cover, and ease of handling. Teenagers have made the Teen Age Book Club a 1,100,000 member organization, probably the largest in the world. The Club offers only paperbacks and has a one-for-four free dividend policy. Books come from two major sources: 1) selections from books issued by 15 publishers of low-cost paperbacks; and 2) TAB Books published for the Club. Most of the latter are reprints of hardcover titles popular with teenagers — the horse and dog stories, mysteries, romance, girl's fiction, short story collections, etc.

"Teacher encouragement of voluntary reading from the first grade up and the rapid growth of school and classroom libraries undoubtedly have won students to the pleasures of reading. So they turn to paperbacks. Teenagers now have money in their pockets, money enough to buy paperbacks but seldom enough to buy hardcover books. Their appetite for books grows; sales through the Teen Age Book Club alone this past year went over the \$5,000,000 mark.

"What are the implications of this movement? First, American teenagers are reading abundantly, probably more than their parents. Second, their eagerness to purchase paperbacks now leads publishers to issue books especially chosen for the teenager. Third, the discovery by teenagers that book reading can be fun may be expected to establish book reading as a lifetime habit for many in the coming generation."



### Theme Introduction:

## **Television: A Challenging Frontier**

**E**VERY NOW and then a bomb bursts in our educational midst leaving its nebulous mushroom for all to see. Sometimes such a cloud-like vision is promptly swept away by the winds of opinion and practical experimentation. At other times, it withstands these forces and remains to shower its beneficent fallout upon us. Educational television promises to be an innovation of this latter type.

The appeal of television is not the only argument in favor of its use as an education tool. The sheer numbers to be educated during the next ten years, together with a possible teacher shortage of a quarter of a million, cause us soberly to consider any effective means of teaching a larger number of students with a reduced number of teachers. Educational TV seems to have promise as one solution to this problem.

It is not thought that TV can ever replace the teacher in the classroom. The teacher must conduct and supervise first-hand experiences; guide discussion, problem-solving, critical evaluation; provide follow-up practice, do testing and remedial work; and many other things requiring his or her personal contact with students. It may be, however, that through experimentation we can find certain aspects of the curriculum which can be taught as

effectively or more so by TV, thus lessening the teacher's load.

The army was first to employ TV instruction. Then some of our colleges began to use television. Its use is now beginning to trickle down into the high school and the elementary school. Very little has been done as yet at these two levels. Some people wonder if television ever can be used in teaching the elementary subjects.

This brings us to the point of discussing reading and TV. A country-wide survey was made of Education TV stations, colleges and public school systems to find out if any of them had experimented as yet in teaching reading by television. A few pioneers were found here and there blazing trails on the video frontier. So from the north, south, east and west, from elementary grades through adult life, we bring you stimulating and challenging glimpses of work done by some of those who have dared to explore in this new field. We are grateful to these adventurers for sharing their exciting experiences with us.

As an appropriate setting for the articles on the classroom teaching of reading we invited Dr. Paul Witty of Northwestern University to tell us about his most recent research in this area. His article, "Children, TV and Reading," bristles with interesting, last minute information.

motives which prompted these grants were "to encourage authors and juveniles" and "to help widen the scope and quality of children's literature." Through such steps we may look forward hopefully to wider acquaintance among children with "the wonderful world of books" and rapid increase in the number of excellent books from which children may choose what they want to read.

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Mrs. Nina T. Flierl of Delmar, New York, actually gives us practical step-by-step procedures to use in "Planning and Producing TV Programs in Reading." Her experiences have been at the elementary level. Mrs. Flierl's article will be extremely valuable to anyone who is planning to produce scripts for educational television.

Mr. Charles G. Spiegler tells us of his experiences in high school. His interesting and stimulating article grew out of his work with students in the Food Trade Vocational High School, New York. Mr. Spiegler says, "TV Sends Them! — To The Library."

The college level is represented by an article from Texas. Professor Martin S. Day of the University of Houston describes "Teaching Literature by Television" to college students, housewives and daytime workers. Readers who are interested in college teaching will find practical and helpful suggestions here.

Keith J. Nighbert describes a thrilling "Program for Illiterate Adults" in which 760 illiterates were taught to read and write through the use of television. This outstanding contribution comes from WKNO-TV in Memphis, Tennessee.

By way of special interest, Lucile Cypreasen and Jack McBride of the University of Nebraska have prepared for us an account of using television to teach lipreading to deaf mutes. What a contribution this is!

To top off all of these exciting accounts, we have an article by Professor Lyman C. Hunt, of The

Pennsylvania State University, in which he gives this advice, "Let's Not By-Pass the Reading Teacher." This article describes a TV program for teaching teachers how to teach reading. What could be more fitting as a climax to a series of articles on teaching reading by TV than one showing how the teacher himself or herself can be given instruction in the art of teaching this important subject!

In addition to the excellent television discussions and Dr. Gray's stimulating article on "What's Happening in Reading" we hope you will enjoy the fresh and interesting information which our various department contributors are bringing to you in this issue.

And be sure to note some of the new features of *THE READING TEACHER*. Do you like the plain but sparkling new cover with its large, bold lettering? As you read through the magazine, be sure to take note of our new department called "The Clip Sheet." The material for this month's Clip Sheet was prepared by Dr. Nancy Larrick, and you will find it brimful of helpful suggestions. Please note also that this issue contains 72 pages instead of the usual 64. You will be given this extra measure of good things during the months ahead.

We trust that you will find this issue and all of the other issues of this coming year as stimulative, informative and helpful as we would like them to be.

NILA BANTON SMITH  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

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## Children, TV and Reading

by PAUL WITTY

● NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

"I THINK TV IS ONE of the best inventions ever made. The car and the radio are good too but my favorite is TV. A long time ago, when our mothers and fathers were little, they had no TV. But I am glad to have TV now. I don't know what I would do without it. I think television is the most interesting thing in the world." This letter, from a third grade girl, undoubtedly expresses the attitude of many other children who are irresistibly attracted to TV.

TV came to the Chicago area in 1949. By 1950, the per cent of children having sets at home was 43; by 1951, the per cent was 68; in 1952, it had risen to 88. Year by year, the figure went up until in 1957, 96 per cent of the pupils had TV sets at home and 13 per cent had more than one set. These results were obtained in yearly studies made since 1949 of approximately 2000 pupils, their teachers, and their parents. The results of these inquiries have been presented every year in *Elementary English*. The eighth report, for the year 1957, will appear in a fall issue. It will include data from extensive studies made in April and May 1957, in Evanston, Kenosha County, and Chicago. In this paper we shall present the results obtained in some of the earlier studies and make some comparisons with findings only from

the Kenosha County study of 1957.

In 1950, the amount of time given to TV by the elementary school pupils was on the average 21 hours per week; in 1951 the average was 19 hours. But the average rose somewhat with the appearance of new and more appealing programs. In 1957 the average for elementary pupils was 26 hours in Kenosha County. This average is higher than that found for Evanston children in 1957 (20 hours), but it approximates averages obtained in certain other reports. Averages vary depending upon factors such as the time of the year each study is made, the techniques employed, the age of the pupils, and other conditions.

In 1950, the parents spent 24 hours on the average each week televiewing, about 20 hours in 1951, 19 hours in 1953. In 1957, the average was 22 hours. Teachers continue to spend less time with TV than do the children or their parents. At first, the teachers' average was about nine hours per week; and in 1957, it was almost the same.

These studies show that TV has captivated children and has maintained or increased its hold on them. Television is their favorite leisure activity consuming on the average more than 20 hours weekly.

In 1950 the favorite programs of the children included: *Hopalong Cassidy*, *Howdy Doody*, *Lone*



*Ranger*, *Milton Berle*, *Arthur Godfrey*, and *Small Fry*. In 1952, *I Love Lucy* became the best-liked program of the boys and girls, and *My Friend Irma* and *Roy Rogers* were also popular. In 1953, *Superman*, *Red Buttons*, and *Dragnet* found their way toward the top of the list of favorites. In 1954, the elementary school pupils liked these programs best: *I Love Lucy*, *Dragnet*, *Little Margie*, *Roy Rogers*, *Topper*, and *Superman*.

In 1955, first place was given to *Disneyland*, and *Rin-Tin-Tin* and *Lassie* became popular too. *I Love Lucy*, the former favorite, dropped to fourth place. In 1956, similar ratings were reported, with *Disneyland* first and *I Love Lucy*, third. In 1957, the pupils gave *Disneyland* first place; and *I Love Lucy*, second; *Cheyenne*, third; and *Lassie*, fourth.

### Televiewing and Grades in School

At first, there were ominous predictions concerning the effects TV would have on school achievement. Critics saw in TV a threat to academic proficiency and a possible source of disinterest in school work. There was much discussion about the influence of TV on grades. In a survey made in the high school of Roselle, New Jersey, it was reported in 1950 that the grades of pupils who watched TV regularly dropped 15 per cent.<sup>1</sup> About the same time Philip Lewis studied Hyde Park high school students in Chicago. The grades of the sophomores were

recorded for a period of a year and a half preceding the study as well as at the time of the study. Despite the fact that an average decrease of 5 per cent was found, TV actually seemed to help students with some subjects.<sup>2</sup> And in 1950, Ira Cain,<sup>3</sup> the TV editor of the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*, reported a study of 144 junior and senior high school students in which 60 per cent of the TV owners' grades were found to be higher than they were the previous year. Thus the results of early studies of grades in relation to the amount of time devoted to TV are conflicting and parallel the diverse attitudes one may find expressed on this question.

The pupils themselves are about equally divided concerning whether TV helps or hinders their school work. Those who think it helps mention the values of TV in improving their vocabularies, their knowledge of history, of current events, and science, of people at home and around the world, and of books old and new.

### Some Results of Studies of Televiewing and Success in School

Recent studies make it clear that amount of televiewing is not related closely to intelligence or to scholarship objectively measured.<sup>4</sup> Excessive viewing of TV, however, seems to be associated with somewhat

<sup>1</sup>"TV Viewing Hurts Grades of Sophs and Juniors but Helps Seniors." *Advertising Age*, May 8, 1950.

<sup>2</sup>"TV Lifts Students' Grades in Texas but Lowers Them in New Jersey." *Advertising Age*, March, 20, 1950.

<sup>3</sup>Jack Greenstein, "Effect of Television Upon Elementary School Grades," *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. XLVIII (November, 1954), pp. 161-176.

<sup>4</sup>"TV — Enemy of Education?" *Senior Scholastic*, Vol. 57, September, 1950.

lower academic attainment. Our studies show a rather consistent trend in this respect.

An interesting study of the relationship of televising to school achievement was reported by Lloyd F. Scott in San Leandro, California<sup>5</sup> in 1956. He studied 456 sixth and seventh grade students in 15 classes of four schools. The upper 27 per cent (who viewed from 22¾ hours to 69½ hours) were compared with the lower 27 per cent (who viewed from 0 hours to 9¾ hours per week). The average IQ (language quotient) was 107 for the lower group, 101 for the upper group; the IQ (non-language) for the upper was 107; for the lower group, it was 109. Significant differences between the groups were not found in language and spelling, but differences favoring those who televised very little appeared in arithmetic, reading, and total achievement.

In our investigations, *excessive* viewing of television, appeared to be related to somewhat lower academic attainment. In one study, we divided the children into groups on the basis of standard educational tests. The average time devoted to TV by the upper fourth in scholarship was 21 hours per week; while that of the lower fourth was 26 hours. Although televising did not appear to influence educational attainment generally, there were individual cases who were affected adversely. But we should point out that there were other children who

were led to do better work in school because of interest engendered by TV.

### TV and Children's Reading

Again and again it has been said that children are reading less than before TV. During our first surveys there appeared to be a slight drop in the amount of children's reading. This decline was reported by parents and teachers alike and by the children, too. But recently there is a trend toward increased amounts of reading. There are, of course, some pupils who read less — they are considered a real problem by their parents and teachers. Yet the fact remains that many children are reading widely today.

Several writers have indicated ways in which interests awakened by TV may be associated with reading at home and in school. In a provocative article, Helen Huus<sup>6</sup> suggests a wide variety of books which can be used advantageously after the viewing of a TV presentation such as *Bear Country*. Another excellent list is found in *Parents' Magazine* (November, 1956).

### The Role of the Parent

Writers have repeatedly emphasized the significant role played by the parent in effective guidance of TV. Ella Callista Clark,<sup>7</sup> after completing a TV survey in Milwaukee, comments on the way some parents

<sup>5</sup>Helen Huus. "How a TV Program Can Be Used as a Springboard to Further Reading." *Elementary English*, Vol. 34 (February, 1957), pp. 81-84.

<sup>7</sup>Ella Callista Clark. "What Is TV Doing To Us?" *The Catholic School Journal*, Vol. 56 (May, 1956), p. 141.

<sup>6</sup>Lloyd F. Scott. "Television and School Achievement." *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 38 (October, 1956), pp. 25-28.

are guiding children's TV habits:

"First of all, these parents have for the first time actually sat down and watched TV programs with their children. Somewhat startled by the violent crime fare or other undesirable content offered by some of the children's favorite programs, they have taken steps to eliminate such experiences and guide their children into intelligent evaluation and choice of desirable programs. They have also attempted to increase the attractiveness of other pursuits such as reading, family conversation, hobbies, and activities designed to develop creative ability in their children. They are including in their programs of family living the best which TV has to offer, but they are forbidding TV to control their homes and absorb inordinate amounts of time.

"Working together, teachers and parents can, it seems, build for children a far more advantageous climate of growth than now exists, and TV rightly used can make an excellent contribution."

### Televiewing as a Way of Learning

Despite the problems presented by TV there are possibilities of capitalizing on this strong interest of children to provide motivation and to foster learning. One pupil remarked: "TV has opened my eyes to science — I am really interested now." And another child remarked: "I am learning about people in other countries from TV."

Some teachers and parents may be able to recall instances of the following kind from their observation of children. Robert Goldenson, in *Parents' Magazine* (November, 1956), includes a remarkable composition written by a ten-year-old boy, who describes with a high degree of accuracy an operation on the heart of a young girl.

This composition was not based upon anything the boy had read or studied in school but on a single sequence seen on TV which lasted not more than five minutes! There are many other children, who like this boy, are extending their interests and enriching their experiences through TV.

Several writers indicate that TV is enlarging children's vocabularies. For example, Clara Evans<sup>8</sup> cites the positive influence of TV on the vocabulary development of children, but this influence may be good or bad depending upon the quality of the programs. Our studies similarly reveal that children are increasing and changing their vocabularies through TV. The desirability of the changes depends upon the way words and concepts are presented. The greatest gains appear to be made by primary grade children. Undeniably children are learning through this new medium, but they need guidance to gain the most from it.

### Criticisms of TV

One characteristic of TV has been

<sup>8</sup>Clara Evans, "Tots and TV," *Childhood Education*, Vol. 33, March, 1957.



repeatedly cited by both parents and teachers — namely, the inferior quality of many programs for children. Parents stress the high frequency of mystery and crime presentations on TV; and inquire: "Why don't we have better children's programs?" There is good reason for this concern. *The National Association for Better Radio and Television* announced in 1954 that crime and violence programs for children had increased 400 per cent during the preceding three years.

In 1955, this organization published another report which showed that the situation was somewhat improved by the increased availability of other more desirable programs. Although some improvement seems to have taken place, there is a need for further desirable change. It is clear that many children's programs continue to feature portrayals of crime and violence. And there are many programs of mediocre or inferior quality.

There is in addition an even larger problem which confronts us in an era of TV. We are increasingly confronted by a culture that emphasizes purchased leisure and effortless recreation. Almost three decades or more ago, we stressed the mechanization of our leisure and cited the increasing tendency of children and adults to turn to sedentary activities such as riding in an automobile, listening to the radio, and watching other people compete in sports.<sup>9</sup>

Today with TV consuming so much of our children's time, we should be zealous that they are encouraged to participate in varied wholesome physical activities and desirable group pursuits. And we should recognize the danger that children's lives will become dominated by the pursuit of largely effortless and often profitless entertainment. However, we should recognize the potentialities in TV and try to utilize it wisely and constructively to promote children's welfare.

David Manning White<sup>10</sup> cites some superior programs that have been presented on TV, such as Sir Laurence Olivier's "Richard III" which "was viewed by the largest daytime audience in television's history (. . . more than 50 million people)."

"To be sure, there is a great deal that is mediocre, repetitious and patronizing in television, the movies, or any of our popular arts. Yet if we close our eyes to the significant contributions of the mass media, do we not encourage the very banality we purport to despise?"

### Suggestions for Parents and Teachers

The antidote to the undesirable aspects of TV lies in the provision of a constructive program of guidance for children and young people. In working together on such a program, these suggestions might be followed to advantage by teachers

<sup>9</sup>H. C. Lehman and Paul A. Witty. *The Psychology of Play Activities*. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1927.

<sup>10</sup>David Manning White. "What Is Happening to Mass Culture." *The Saturday Review*, November 3, 1956.

and parents, for example:

1. Examine the recreational opportunities of your school and community. Try to offer boys and girls abundant opportunities for play activities and creative pursuits that will balance sedentary activities such as televiewing.

2. Study the children in your class or home and try to ascertain their varied interests and needs. Offer constructive suggestions so as to bring about balanced programs of recreation.

3. Set up a family or school council to suggest effective ways of budgeting time. Develop criteria for the selection of TV programs and suggest programs to children which are associated with worthwhile school or home endeavor.

4. Strive to improve the offerings on TV. At the present time there is still a unique opportunity for parents and teachers to participate in a widespread effort aiming at the production of improved TV offerings.

5. Help children develop more efficient reading habits and skills so that they will enjoy the act of reading as well as the results. Study their preferences shown in reactions to TV and try to extend worthwhile interests through experience in reading good books.

### **Fostering Good Reading**

There has been during the past few years, a large amount of criticism of the reading ability and the reading habits of boys and girls. Of course many children need to be helped to develop more effective

habits and skills in reading. Another need involves the cultivation of an interest in reading. Children should be encouraged to read widely from materials associated with their interests. To do this effectively, parents and teachers must become acquainted with many excellent recently published books.

In home as well as in school, parents and teachers should strive to provide an atmosphere conducive to wide reading. Although TV is not often the single cause of poor reading, it does offer a real temptation for children who read poorly to escape into a pleasant, effortless pastime. For other children, televiewing may consume too much of their time and lead to little development or progress. But TV can become an asset if parents and teachers will provide guidance for children in the selection of programs and will aim as well to cultivate and extend worthy interests engendered by TV.

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### **OCTOBER, DECEMBER 1956 ISSUES NEEDED**

Dr. James M. McCallister states that he has many requests for the 1956 October and December issues of *The Reading Teacher*. If you should have an extra copy of one of these issues, Dr. McCallister would appreciate having you send it to him at 5835 Kimbark Ave., Chicago 37, Illinois.

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## Planning and Producing TV Programs in Reading

by NINA T. FLIERL

● READING TEACHER  
BETHLEHEM CENTRAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT  
DELMAR, NEW YORK

SO YOU'RE GOING to teach reading on television! Be ready to enter a whole new world — of scripts, lights, camera, "you're on", producer-director, video, audio . . . You will also be entering a world that is exciting, is challenging, is filled with hard work, and is a frontier in education today. Why will you be willing to take the work, the tension, the newness of this teaching? The principal reason is that you will be teaching reading to so many, many pupils — sometimes hundreds more in a single lesson than you might teach in a regular classroom in several years.

My own experience is based on two reading series produced by the Mohawk Hudson Council on Educational Television and broadcast over Schenectady Station WRGB; and, in addition closed circuit reading lesson demonstrations for Mr. Francis E. Almstead, Special Consultant in Educational Television for the New York State Education Department.

With the assumption that reading is getting meaning from the printed page, tremendous avenues are open to the reading teacher on television. You will find precious little that is teachable which can not be done.

Almost any reading subject area, skill, or technique can be adapted and taught. One of my programs "visited" the Indian section of the New York State Museum with the curator as guest. Students read more intelligently and with more meaning after seeing an authentic headdress, a war club, a necklace, some early cooking utensils . . . along with explanations. As for stimulating reading, all the books on Indians had been withdrawn from the school library before the afternoon dismissal. Guests, exhibits, visits, puppet shows, and special events, interwoven with sound reading instruction — all have a place in television reading programs.

### Planning the Outline

The first step is to plan an outline of the lessons to be televised. The planning depends on your objectives or goals. You must know what you plan to teach and how you plan to teach it. The outline includes your general aims for the series. For each lesson gives: the title, the date, one or two questions to be answered in the lesson, and a brief two or three sentence summary of the lesson. My first series, coming just after Flesch's "Why Johnny Can't Read", aimed

to teach reading at different grade levels and to give a picture of an elementary reading program, Kindergarten through grade six. A year later the second series, for intermediate grades, aimed to develop reading power, to establish some permanent reading interests, and to stimulate wide reading. Two of the programs appeared in the outline as follows:

**Program I — September 11 —  
*The Library and the Librarian***

1. Do you know your way around the library — your school library, your town library, or your city library?
2. What is the New York State Library?
3. How can the librarian help you to widen your reading road?

The librarian will talk about parts of a library. She will also discuss how you can make use of your librarian to further your reading. Books will be suggested for your reading.

**Program V — October 29 —  
*Looking at the World With  
a Geographic Eye***

1. Do you look at the world — your community, your travels in other areas, your understanding of current events . . . with a geographic eye?
2. What does geography mean?
3. Do you know how to read maps?

A professional geographer will be a guest on the program.

Geography as a subject will be discussed. The map is the tool of the geographer, and the reading of some map projections will be taught.

Outlines such as those above give an over-all view of planned lessons and should stimulate classroom teachers to use the programs.

**Preparing Special Interest Events**

The second step in your planning is to start preparation of those special interest events of your programs, whether guests, exhibits, puppet shows, or "visits". Interesting guests are usually quite willing to be on television, if they know exactly what is required and have this information well in advance. You must choose your guest in terms of your reading subject.

Your guests need to have a command of their particular subject or field rather than television personalities, for knowledge and enthusiasm are readily communicated over television. When the State Archaeologist was interviewed on my program, a boy in a remote rural school became an avid archaeology enthusiast — an interest still going strong at the close of the school year.

Pupils can be used for special interest events, as long as learning for viewers goes on. Reports, dramatizations, and puppet shows by pupils require long-range planning. For example, one sixth grade class produced a puppet show based on Greek myths. Viewing pupils learned about these myths, became familiar with a Greek god, and were stimulated to

read some myths suggested on the program.

### Planning Program Format

From both the television teacher's and pupil's viewpoints it is desirable to have the same format for each program. The television teacher, especially the new television teacher, gains security and command of the timing with the same format for each lesson. As for the student, television teaching is necessarily different from the classroom in that the teaching is completed and finished at one viewing. The pupil can not refer back to the classroom black-board nor can he question the teacher for a hazy point. It is important at all times that he be ready for the television teaching, and the same format for each program helps to insure student readiness.

The format of my programs evolved into this general pattern:

- Introduction—3 minutes
- Guest or special interest item—8 minutes
- Related teaching—5 minutes
- Vocabulary of lesson—5 minutes
- Suggested Books—5 minutes
- Summary—3 minutes

### Writing the Script

Next comes the actual working out of a script. An outline helps to organize the lesson. Let's review some of the new vocabulary you will learn: video (what is seen), audio (what is heard), CU (close-up), OS (offset), rear screen, cue and super.

The script is the base of your

program. You, the director, the producer, guests, camera men, and audio men take cues according to the script. It usually does not contain every word or phrase to be said on the program, for this would be cumbersome. Rather, cues are given in the script, and individuals work out their own notes or cards just as in a classroom teaching situation. Part of my script for the program *South America Beckons* was as follows:

#### Video

CU 3 Pots 5 to 8 in. high  
Flierl at desk  
Dr. Stewart joins Flierl  
at desk

#### Audio

Introduction by Flierl cue  
—"let's review our lesson"  
Follow-up of previous lessons. Cue—"am happy to introduce our guest, Dr. Stewart"

Discussion with guest

#### Time

1 minute  
2 minutes  
5 minutes

In this program the opening close-up on ancient Peruvian pots was accompanied by a one minute explanation to stimulate interest in the lesson. As "let's review our lessons" is said, the camera picks up the reading teacher at the desk. The lesson proceeds with her on video until "I am happy to introduce our guest, Dr. Stewart" when the camera moves to include the guest.

Television teaching actually proceeds with much like classroom

teaching except for "cueing" items for video. In other words, the television teacher learns to make a move after first letting the director know. This is often as simple as "Let's meet our guest" or "we will now turn to our chart." Such cues are extremely important in the planning and writing of your script. The completed script for your program will contain all the video items with approximate sizes, audio items in a summary form, and the cue lines to indicate changes from one video to another.

### **Drawing a Floor Plan**

A floor plan is included with each script. This is usually a rough sketch to indicate the required flats and furniture. Penciled notes help your producer to visualize the approaching program. Some items used in my programs included a desk which was my home base, a table and chairs for exhibits and guests, flats to contain vocabulary words and book titles, a blackboard easel, an easel for offset pictures and charts, and a puppet stage.

### **Preparing Study Guides**

A study guide for your classroom teacher is next in your planning. In my second series, study guides were prepared for each lesson and sent to participating classroom teachers a week in advance of the program. Each study guide gave the following information about the approaching program: Date and Time, Subject, Participants, Objectives, Content Summary, Suggested Preparation,

Suggested Follow-up Activities, Vocabulary, and Materials for Further Class Use. The latter item included not only books but also filmstrips and films. School librarians were tremendously helpful in compiling these bibliographies. The study guide helps the classroom teacher to have students both ready for the television teaching and to do follow-up after the program.

### **Planning for Copyright Material**

Another part of your program to consider in advance planning is the use of copyrighted material. The use of any material—reading a passage from a basal reader, showing a picture from a magazine, running a filmstrip . . . must have permission from the publisher. This is usually readily granted if you indicate in your letter the date and time of presentation and say that the material is to be used on an educational, non-commercial television program. You can use any book, pamphlet, or magazine so long as it is not opened and you are not quoting. For example, you can talk about a book with the book and jacket cover appearing on video. If you plan actually to use copyrighted material, plan well in advance in order to be sure of securing permission to use desired material.

### **Making Visuals**

Television and visuals go hand in hand. A visual, in its broadest sense, is almost anything on your program—you, a chart, a picture, an Egyptian bottle, a book, a student, or a



guest. The narrower interpretation of visuals includes charts, cartoons, graphs which are prepared specifically for use on a television program. Visuals of this kind are always in a 2x3 ratio, that is 2" by 3", 12" by 18", or any 2x3 ratio so as to fit on the TV screen. Any size picture or chart can be picked up in its entirety if this ratio is used. Many visuals are offsets. Instead of pointing to a chart and explaining as in a classroom, you cue the chart which appears in video as your explanation comes over audio. Visuals should be done on gray, dull finish paper with a black evenflo pen for lettering or drawing. Another kind of visual is "supering", the white lettering of words or titles on black paper. Then as an explanation of a vocabulary word, a book, or a reading technique is done by the reading teacher, the word or phrase is photographed by a second camera and appears across the bottom of the video. Visuals need careful planning and doing, and an art teacher is almost a necessity for the preparation of this part of your program.

### Rehearsing the Program

In all of this preparation—the series outline, the study guide and the script with its visuals, you have been in frequent touch with your producer who takes your knowledge of how to teach reading and helps to adapt it to use on television. Now in the final pulling together of the program, the producer will be very much in evidence. You will have rehearsals, not of every exact word

or phrase, but rather of the general progression of the program. A television lesson should not be a memorized affair anymore than a classroom lesson. However, all participants need to know in general what they are to do and say, and when they are "on". Guests on your program need to know the questions you will ask, and you need to know the approximate answers. You will certainly have one rehearsal with your producer, usually two or three days before the program to allow for any changes.

### Doing the Program

Then the day arrives, the program depends on *you*, the reading teacher as is true of every reading lesson. Usually, you will have a "run down" at the studio with your director and producer. This is simply telling the director where you and the other participants will be on the set and showing him the visuals. The more feeling the director has for what you are teaching, the better the lesson will be.

Then it's lights, camera, the signal from the floor manager, and you start teaching to the red light on the camera. The red light soon becomes a friend and a symbol of the friends out there watching and learning. Television has a particularly intimate quality for the viewer, and you teach as if you were teaching one boy or girl. You try to be yourself and teach in the same way you always do, for that is actually why you are here. You try especially hard to remember the cues. You

help your guests and pupils to relax on the program and try to bring out the best in each one. You keep control of the timing of the program. You help the camera man to get the best shot of exhibit visuals by holding them at an angle and in *one* place.

Many little techniques for making a smooth program will be learned from producer, director, and camera men. In fact, you will know you have "arrived" the day the camera men start reacting to your television program. In one of my early programs, I asked for a show of hands by those pupils who had read one book during the week, and up flew the hands of my two cameramen.

You will be prepared to adapt your lesson if some visual does not appear even though cued, for television is a live medium and both mechanical and human error can happen. Through the whole program you will do your best to make this a good reading lesson.

The program ends, and you would like to come down to earth, but you hear, "Now next week you're going to do how to read your social studies assignment". It's your producer, and you're off on the next program plan.

Excitement . . . fun . . . a sense of accomplishment—all are part of teaching reading on television. Best of luck to you!

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## TV Sends Them! — to the Library

by CHARLES G. SPIEGLER

● FOOD TRADE VOCATIONAL HIGH  
SCHOOL, NEW YORK CITY

WHEN I FIRST met 15-year-old Sandy Rakell a year ago in my sophomore English class, he was, like many of the boys in that class and like thousands of boys all over the country, — a reluctant reader. He *could* read, but he *wouldn't*. The activities around a ball-field, the fun he could get on his bike, the dramatic happenings in his block, intrigued him far more than mere words in a mere book.

Today, if you walked into Sandy's den, you'd find the following books among others on the same theme borrowed in recent weeks from the library: *The F.B.I.* by Quentin Reynolds, *The Story of Scotland Yard* by Thompson, *Sherlock Holmes* by Conan Doyle. If you visited his basement, you'd find it had undergone a metamorphosis from the workshop it once was to a veritable Police Headquarters, equipped with all the paraphernalia thereunto attached down to an expensive microscope for checking fingerprints. Come to his desk and you'll find the carbon copies of the bushel-full of letters he has typed within the year to men ranging in importance from J. Edgar Hoover down to the least known Police Chief in the smallest hamlet. In response to these letters his files are full of pamphlets on the one subject

that fascinates him—*Crime—How to Fight it!* In this one area Sandy, far from being a reluctant reader, is indeed, the most avid of readers.

Ask him how this change came about and he'd explain it by way of TV's *Dragnet* which he watched regularly. Fascinated by Sergeant Friday's technique of carefully analyzing a set of facts around a crime, then pursuing these diligently in all their ramifications, Sandy decided to emulate his hero, with the reading (and other language arts) results we have seen. What no prescribed book list could do, what no teacher appeal could do, what no parental ukase could do—TV *did* do. As Sandy himself put it to me one day—"I never used to have a library card! Why should I? Now I got one because I like to read about how they catch crooks and murderers . . . Anyhow, I wanna study to be a detective!" With this as a life goal, he was now reading. It was TV which had sent him to the library.

### TV's Influence Upon Reading

This is not an isolated account of TV's influence upon the reading pattern of American youth. There is mounting evidence that in every part of the country "the enthusiasm and curiosity generated by

television are natural springboards to children's reading."<sup>1</sup> Talk to Morris Goldberger, Promotion Director of the country's largest book club—The Teen Age Book Club, more than 1,000,000 strong—and he tells you, "When we first put out *The Day Lincoln Was Shot* it moseyed along at 1000 copies sold a week. Then TV did the show. The next week — orders for 25,000!" In Seattle, Washington—when Gloria Chandler completes a *Teladventure Tale* show for youngsters "all the books by all the authors mentioned on the show will be gone from all the shelves in all the 38 branches of our libraries shortly after that show" is the report. Nor are these runs purely on story books. School librarians nationwide report that shortly after a *Person to Person* show the demand for more and more material on the people interviewed is insatiable. As for the effect of the quiz shows on reading, let this one High School librarian speak for others—"Before TV many of our encyclopedias, atlases and other reference books were gathering dust on our book shelves. Ever since the puzzle, quiz and question mania, almost all day now there are empty spaces where these tomes once stood. Even at the 3 PM bell some of the spaces haven't been filled. We're losing more reference books than ever in our history".

Our concern over the thefts, immoral as these are, is perhaps compensated for somewhat by the fact

that in some quiet corner, in some dimly-lit home, some youngster is reading about how a Hank Bloomgarden or a Robbie Strom or a Teddy Nadler did it!

### What about Shakespeare?

Yet, despite all the evidence that TV is a boon to reading, there is a considerable number of American Educators who deny this stoutly! Their one-time "scholars", they will cry, now sit glued to the TV set for three, four, five hours a day. At book report time, students don't talk about the hero of the book; they refer to him as the "star". ("They don't read pages any more", complains one such critic, "They're busy flipping dials—").

The fact is, however, that Television need not *compete* with Shakespeare at all. It can (and does) work harmoniously with him wherever the master craftsman teacher is at work. Thus, when Sir Laurence Olivier did *Richard III* on TV, one Southern High School, instead of banning it from view as a contamination of the Bard, used it to motivate a full week of study throughout the school. English classes searched for copies of the play in preparation for the film. History classes prepared background reports on the War of the Roses. Drama classes were briefed on the main action of the play. Scores of youngsters who might otherwise never have gotten to *Richard III* either through seeing it on Broadway, or at the neighborhood movie house, or by reading it, were so

<sup>1</sup>From "Random Notes on Children's Reading," Random House.

thrilled by the Olivier version they started a run for it on the community library that was hardly ever equalled (except by *Peter Pan*, *Davy Crockett*, and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*—each after a TV version of the book had been presented). “More boys and girls at least fingered and leafed through a Shakespeare play in the week that followed Olivier’s *Richard* than in the full year preceding”, the librarian reports. Many took the play out for the pure pleasure of reading it in toto; one boy to relive the full flavor of the one scene that intrigued him—“Where the poor guy is all alone—surrounded by all the guys who hate him and he yells—‘A horse—a horse—my kingdom for a horse—’.” For the hundreds of teenagers in that Southern community who live a thousand miles from Broadway and many thousands of miles from the Old Vic, Sir Laurence Olivier performing Shakespeare’s *Richard III* in their very own living rooms became a boon to further reading, not a bane.

This is not to argue that all is sugar and Shakespeare in TV programming or that all the 7,000,000 high school students in America sit enthralled by the artistic, the learned and the thought-provoking shows on the air. All the national surveys prove that, unguided and undirected, adolescents will watch much that is shoddy, meretricious, even dangerous to life and limb. We see this in the story of the Kansas City youngster who believed so implicitly in Superman’s ability to fly, he

made himself a flying cape out of his mother’s best drapes, tried to imitate his hero, “flew” out of a two-story window and came down with a body full of broken bones. Unguided and undirected TV can become a menace not only to the metatarsals, but to manners and morals as well.

### Our Role as Educators

But, it is our role as educators to guide and to direct. Now that TV has taken over as the greatest mass communication medium in the history of mankind, it is our function as teachers to help children select, to teach them discrimination, to give them a course in what TV Guide calls “Dialmanship”. Once having done this, as Patrick Hazard points out (in March ’56 *Elementary English*) “There is actually more caviar on the network schedules than the most gluttonous intellectual gourmet could manage to consume—,” and the potential for reading is infinite. To see what this means, study some of the programs that TV gave us in one week—February 28 to March 8, 1957. A science teacher, who wanted to, could have recommended a program explaining the jet steam concept, then recommended the Schneiders’ *More Power to You* for further reading. An English teacher might have had a veritable bonanza in Sinclair Lewis’ *Babbitt*, John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*, Paul Vincent Carroll’s *Shadow and Substance*. A Drama teacher could have recommended Jean Louis Barrault who

discussed Pantomime, then suggested dozens of books on the subject. As to Social Studies teachers—no matter where they were in their textbooks that week—Alaska, Canada, Florida, Louisiana, the Sahara, Japan, the Mid-East, TV was there, too, to help make the oft-so-pedestrian words of a textbook come alive and to rouse an interest in reading *Alaskan Tales* by Annabel or *The Lewis and Clark Expedition* by Neuberger or *The Real Book About the Mounties* by Block.

Fortunately there are administrators, teachers and librarians to whom TV is, as Dr. Willard Abraham, Professor of Education at Arizona State College has said, "more an aid to reading than a hinderer to it because it builds young vocabularies and stimulates curiosity on matters that are suggested on TV." In my own school, for example, we've taken TV out of the educational "dog house" by encouraging parents to set time aside for the shows that subject teachers deem worthy to see; by having our Honor Society issue a weekly TV Guide of shows it deems worthy for our 700 students to see; by giving genuine status in the curriculum to Teachers Guides coming from the networks and the Teleguides being published by Scholastic magazine. Thus you can walk into one English class and find the teacher unashamedly recommending to Benny Smithers "Look at the dictionary" when he unashamedly admits to viewing Westerns by the dozen and finding that he's confused by the meaning of the phrase

"Protective Association". Walk into a Social Studies Class and you learn that when the Senate hearings on Dave Beck and the Teamsters Union were in session Alex Kahn who, like his classmates, had this topic for homework, found himself studying the Constitution of the United States with deeper purpose than he ever had. "I heard them talk so much about the Fifth Amendment—" he explained, "I wanted to find out just what it said—and what it meant." And when TV ran the *Conquest of Everest* movie, one entire English class found this motivation enough to read further on: the equipment needed for high altitude climbing; the clothing you need; the knots you need to hold the ropes you use; Buddha and the Buddhist religion; Tibetan climate and customs; and a host of related topics. Study the book reports filed in my office at the end of a semester and you'll find consistently larger numbers of reports being made on books like *A Night to Remember*, *Wild Bill Hickock*, *The Mighty Atom* all apparently TV motivated reading.

From many parts of the country come similar reports of alert school leaders who didn't hide their heads in the sand when TV arrived, or dream of the dear, dead days of the past, but who met the challenge directly—and successfully. One Kansas City, Mo. librarian, for example, issues an item she calls *TV Book Shelf* (children's books related to television programs). Essentially it says "If you watch *Voice of Fire-*

(continued on page 46)

## Teaching Literature by Television

by MARTIN S. DAY

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**E**NGLISH 313, Values in Literature, is the first course in the humanistic area to be given for full academic credit and to be conducted exclusively over television by the University of Houston's KUHT, the first television station ever dedicated entirely to education.

Since KUHT started active telecasting on May 29, 1953, it has offered over the air a wide variety of collegiate courses ranging from accounting to zoology. The standard sophomore course, Man and the Arts, presented by the English Department, has utilized television facilities since September of 1953. This course consists of two hours of classroom lectures per week, largely on literary masterpieces from Homer to Ibsen, and one hour weekly of television devoted to painting, sculpture, architecture, and music as interpreted by guest specialists in each field.

Values in Literature, however, was a calculated experiment by the English Department to offer a TV collegiate course to viewers who need never see the instructor in person except at the final examination. To present this course Dr. C. Dwight Dorough, Chairman of the English Department, designated the writer,

who often had appeared on the KUHT program as lecturer, spelling bee official, and quizmaster for an educational question-and-answer show. Publicized by a circulated brochure, by newspaper stories, and by two half-hour "showcase" sample TV lectures, the course was inaugurated on February 4, 1957.

### Nature of the Course

English 313 consisted of a three-quarter hour telecast on Tuesday mornings from 9:00 to 9:45 and a repeat lecture on Wednesday evenings from 6:45 to 7:30. The morning schedule was planned for housewives and for college students free at that hour. The evening repetition was intended for daytime workers. For those successfully completing the course, one hour of academic credit was awarded towards graduation. Tuition was \$15. The course was open only to those who had completed sophomore English literature or its equivalent. It was felt that a pure television fare was inadvisable for those who had not been subject for awhile to the discipline of classroom courses.

Every enrollee in English 313 received a 16 page syllabus which on separate sheets outlined each week's



lecture, listed an assigned reading, and provided space for answers to questions on the assigned reading. Following the sheet for the ninth week appeared an extra page on whose front the student should answer a mid-term question and on whose back he could indicate any questions he wished answered by the instructor. The sheets for the first nine weeks plus the sheet with the mid-term examination were mailed to the writer not later than April 5, 1957. These ten sheets were graded and mailed back to the students.

For the final examination, given Monday night, May 27, and Tuesday afternoon, May 28, students were required to be physically present on the campus and were requested to bring with them the completed sheets for the ninth through the sixteenth lectures. A one-hour written examination concluded the semester's work.

The lectures for the fifteen weeks were titled as follows: Why and How to Read Literature, Aesthetics in Literature (two weeks), Non-Aesthetic Qualities in Literature, Fiction (two weeks), Poetry (two weeks), Poetry and Symbolism, Reading Drama (two weeks), Discussion of Questions Received with the Mid-Term Papers, Tragedy, Humor, the Essay, Literary Criticism, Literary Criticism and Summary.

### A Typical Telecast

In the television lectures extensive use was made of audio-visual aids such as film clips, a live drama-

tization of scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*, pictures of literary men and fictional characters and episodes, readings from books, interviews, a question and answer session, and recordings of both music and literature.

Let us see how a typical telecast of English 313 appears. The fifth lecture, like all the rest, starts with a filmed introduction, imaginatively conceived by Dr. Tom C. Battin of the University's Radio and Television Department. The screen is filled with a host of books, suspended by invisible strings and slowly moving like mobiles. Lively music is sounding meanwhile. The camera pushes through the moving volumes towards a stationary book that bears on its front, "Values in Literature." In the close-up a hand opens the book, disclosing an end paper of Literary England, then a page "English 313," and next a page reading "With Dr. Martin S. Day." The music has dropped down and an announcer introduces English 313 and the lecturer.

Now upon the screen is the figure of the instructor seated in a comfortable chair. The necessary props are here, but the rostrum and black-board decor of the conventional classroom is studiously avoided. To the lecturer's left is a writing pad on which he may scribble with a huge crayon. To his right is a table bearing a desk easel upon which books and pictures may be placed for viewing. The background consists of bookshelves loaded with variegated volumes.

The lecturer speaks without notes, seeking further to avoid the pedantic and to give the atmosphere of a friendly discussion of literature. With a lapel microphone or a microphone suspended from a boom, he is able to move about freely from one section of the set to another.

After opening remarks to explain why fiction is the first specific type of literature to be examined, the instructor steps to the pad and writes upon it the first topic of the lecture, thereafter adding key words, such as "Aristotle," as needed. Discussing conflict or struggle as the essence of plot, he introduces a film clip of *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austin. The clip indicates the arrogant distaste of young Darcy for provincial girls and the bristling reaction by Elizabeth Bennett.

In explaining the plot conflicts of man against nature, man, society and self, the lecturer places upon the easel copies of Conrad's *Typhoon*, Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. Camera close-ups of each book accompany the discussion of the volume.

Upon the pad the instructor sketches the schematic arrangement of an Aristotelian plot, using a classic Wild West story as illustration. Defective plots are examined to see wherein they fail.

Back to the easel moves the lecturer to talk about characters and characterization. As he speaks the camera gives close-ups of artist's concepts of Helen of Troy, Eustacia

Vye, Mr. Micawber, Tom Jones, and Alexei Karamazov.

About now the director of the program is making frantic signs to indicate that the time is up. The lecturer only has a chance to summarize hastily and then attempt to assume a placid smile as the theme music comes in and his image fades out from the monitor and simultaneously from the home screens. The filmed end of the program, repeated after each lecture, imitates the start by having the camera push through slowly revolving books to a volume open to disclose text and an accompanying illustration. In a close-up the arm that originally opened the volume now shuts it to reveal on the cover, "Values of Literature." Music goes up and out, and the fifth lecture of English 313 has ended.

### The Students' Part

Student viewers, having supposedly absorbed the material of the lecture, are expected to look down the fifth sheet from the outline to the assignment, which states:

ASSIGNMENT: Read "Proof of the Pudding" by O. Henry

1. State nature of the plot and briefly analyze the construction of the story.
2. How does O. Henry achieve characterization? Evaluate its effectiveness. What influence has character upon the outcome of the story?
3. In this short story is character or plot predominant? Are character and plot

equally important? Carefully explain and document your judgment.

No textbook was specified for English 313. It seemed a bit unfair to ask a student to buy a relatively expensive text for a course granting only one semester hour of credit. Even more significantly, the instructor objected to the use of one of the usual "introduction to literature" books. He is to steer his students directly to literary works themselves, rather than to bog them down with metrical patterns or the critical theories of Boileau. Furthermore, no anthology contained the variety of assigned readings that moved from *Prometheus Bound* to Robert Benchley's "The Treasurer's Report," and from Shakespearian sonnets to *Candide*. The readings were selected from literary works available in many different editions and anthologies. Students nonetheless complained of multifarious woes in trying to locate the readings. Consequently, volumes containing the assigned selections were placed on the reserve list in the University library.

### The Results

The instructor feels that the students of this TV course performed equally as well as students in comparable classroom courses that he has given. Several told him that seated in their own overstuffed chairs with the syllabus and notebook before them they could concentrate upon the television lecture more satisfactorily and could absorb

more readily than in the traditional classroom. Others voiced the familiar complaint that members of the family demanded Lassie or TV news at the hour they wished to view the course. To the instructor the challenge of a new educational medium and the aura of "show biz" made the job interesting and attractive. From Dr. John W. Meaney, Director of the Radio-TV-Film Center, down to the prop boys, everyone in KUHT extended the fullest and ablest cooperation. Prophecies of the Buck Rogers variety to the contrary, television can never supplant classroom instruction and the personal contacts of student and teacher. Nonetheless, the instructor in English 313 believes from his TV experience that educational television is an invaluable adjunct to conventional instruction and that in certain areas, such as adult teaching, it is unrivalled and consequently will be a permanent fixture of American education.

Administrators of the English Department, the Department of Radio and Television, and the University have expressed satisfaction with the concept and execution of English 313. Upon administrative request, the instructor has submitted a program calling for a one hour television course in English each term over a two year period. Each course will carry one semester hour credit towards graduation. The tentative program calls for courses in Mythology, Introduction to Language, and the Ballads, in addition, of course, to Values in Literature.



## Program for Illiterate Adults

by KEITH J. NIGHBERT

● PROGRAM DIRECTOR,  
WKNO-TV

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

FIGURES, DATA, STATISTICS will never tell the story of this unique project because one can only know and feel it when they sit down in the homes of the students and hear them say over and over that *this* was the greatest experience of their life, or hear someone say, "Now, I can sign my name" or "Now I can write a letter to my folks", or "Now I can read the signs everywhere and it is just like having bandages removed from my eyes."

This is how the project started: In the early days of educational television, an address by the former FCC Commissioner, Paul Walker, led the Program Director of WKNO-TV to explore the possibilities of teaching adult illiterates to read and write via television. Commissioner Walker challenged those in educational broadcasting to meet the need of the 10 to 12 million adults in America who were functional illiterates.

### Preliminary Work

When the program planning for WKNO-TV was initiated it was decided as a matter of policy that the subject matter of programs would cover as wide a field of viewers as possible. WKNO-TV pursued

the matter of illiteracy and discovered that within fifty miles of WKNO-TV's transmitter there were some 57,000 functional illiterates. This information was passed on to various community agencies who were considering grants-in-aid to WKNO-TV and the Memphis Section of the National Council of Jewish Women decided to undertake this project and made a grant of \$1,500 to the station for the purpose of teaching adults to read and write via television.

After careful study of the Indiana University research project paper on various methods used to teach adults to read and write, the Dr. Frank Laubach method "Streamlined English" was selected. It was chosen because of its obvious success, having been used in over 280 languages and dialects in the world; its thorough and speedy technique, and its use of visual symbols and a method which was a natural for the visual media, television. A Memphis school teacher, Mrs. Pauline Hord, presently Director of WKNO-TV's Literacy Department was sent to Syracuse University to be trained in their literacy workshop. Miss Ruth Knowlton, another city school teacher, was sent

to a production workshop to discuss television techniques to be used in presenting this method over television. Dr. Laubach gave his approval to the project and donated the services of one of his associates, Miss Elizabeth Mooney, as consultant to the Memphis project.

A great deal of preliminary work was undertaken by this group including a survey of the concentration of illiterates by census tracts, their interest in such a program and also the required facilities necessary to stage this project. The Council of Jewish Women did a magnificent job in this phase of the project, contacting community leaders, men of business and industry and labor, and civic and service organizations. The results obtained have been cited as perhaps one of the greatest community projects ever undertaken in Shelby County.

Publicity by means of all media was cheerfully given by the Press, Radio and Television here in Memphis and an active interest was created in the project through the efforts of the Advertising Club. This organization alerted all facets of the community to the need for such a service and to the fact that classes were to begin in early October. A Literacy Week was named and the Mayor's proclamation and various speakers at civic club luncheons etc., brought forth great response.

### **The Program in Action**

The acceptance far exceeded the fondest expectation of all concerned and 760 students enrolled. Over 350

are enrolled in 32 reading centers in churches, schools, community centers, hospitals, etc. Over 200 volunteer workers are involved in carrying on this project. At the reading centers, students can view the program under a supervisor who evaluates the impact and progress of the program on the viewers and answers questions from the students. The other enrollees take the course before their television sets at home. Students of Streamlined Reading and the general audience have all acclaimed the excellence of the teaching of Miss Ruth Knowlton.

This program has created an emotional reaction which was not predictable — news stories, editorials and excited national interest. The Director of the Project, Mrs. Pauline Hord was invited to speak before the Adult Education Association in Atlantic City where her talk was something of a sensation. Dr. Ambrose Caliver, Assistant to the U. S. Commissioner of Education and Chief of the Adult Education section, of U. S. Office of Education, has recently visited WKNO-TV to observe this project at first hand and was most enthusiastic about the methods used and practicality of the presentation and the results being achieved. He agreed with those connected with the project that the scope of the original plan be expanded to bring the participants up to the ability of an eighth grade pupil and at the same time another beginners class be started immediately after the first phase of the present program is

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## Lipreading Lessons on Television

by LUCILE CYPREASEN

- ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SPEECH  
and JACK McBRIDE
- DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

AT 11:30 ON Tuesday morning, June 14, 1955, viewers of KUON-TV, the University of Nebraska's educational television station, saw on their screens the beginning of a new series of programs—*Lipreading*.<sup>1</sup> Every Tuesday and Thursday thereafter, these same viewers watched the following information roll off the television screen:

"You are now going to see an unusual half hour of television instruction—unusual because many persons watching are unable to hear the sound portion. Visual representation of words must be used extensively to aid them. Others who hear perfectly will find the course a help in conversation, especially in high noise situations. To the deaf, lipreading is indispensable."

By Thursday, August 4th, a series of sixteen half hour lipreading lessons had been telecast. The experiment, devised to aid the deaf and hard of hearing, was presented by station KUON-TV, University of Nebraska Television, and was

produced in cooperation with the Speech and Hearing Laboratories and the Extension Division of the University of Nebraska.

### Preparation

In an effort to reach an audience interested in this type of program, announcements were made from the television station previous to the program. Descriptions of the telecourse also appeared in the University weekly Bulletin, the Extension Bulletin, and in the daily newspapers. A brochure describing the course was sent to interested agencies, including the Lincoln Society for the Hard of Hearing, the Veterans' Hospital, the Y.M.C.A., and Y.W.C.A., to the otologists within the district, and to the hearing aid companies. A charge of two dollars was made for registration through the Extension Division and for the lipreading manual which accompanied the telecourse. The course was presented on a non-credit basis.

The manual contained the sixteen lessons as they were presented on television. The introduction in the manual explained that the term

<sup>1</sup>Producer-Director for the Lipreading Telecourse was Norris Heineman, University of Nebraska Television, KUON-TV, Lincoln 8, Nebraska.

"speechreading" was preferred to "lipreading" because, when a person learns to understand speech without sound, or with very little sound, he does more than merely "read lips." He watches facial expressions, movements of the body, gestures of all kinds, and gets cues to meaning from the people and things around him and by their actions and interactions.

The learning of speechreading is an exciting accomplishment for the deaf and the hard of hearing, and an interesting hobby for those who have normal hearing.

### Giving the Course

Whenever long announcements or special explanations were made during the program, the messages were presented in print on a revolving drum. By use of the close-up, this material was easily read.

The final broadcast was in the nature of a lipreading test. The listeners were requested to write their answers on the test blanks which appeared in the manuals and to return those sheets to the Extension Division in order that the test responses might be evaluated.

It was expected that a sufficient number of deaf and hard of hearing individuals would be interested in following the lessons and that the test results would show that speechreading could be taught successfully by means of organized lessons given by a qualified teacher over television.

The lessons followed a phonetic approach. Each lesson was built around one, two or three consonant

sounds 'p,' 'b,' and 'm,' and continuing through the tongue-teeth, tongue-teeth-ridge, tongue-palate, sounds, etc. An effort was made to make the practice material stimulating and interesting. Charts were frequently used for short explanatory purposes. The consonants and vowels were charted and used in syllable practice. Word practice in conversational phrases followed, and variety was added by lists of things-that-go-together, common-sayings, by old familiar songs, nursery rhymes, and questions and answer techniques. As often as possible, the lipreading instructor used objects and actions to heighten visual effectiveness. Toys, models, and actual articles were employed to add greater visual impact to the presentation and the teaching.

The fourteenth lesson added further variety by bringing into the program one of Dr. Boris Morkovin's lipreading motion pictures.<sup>2</sup> Lesson thirteen was given over to a discussion of the dialogue used in the motion picture. Lesson fifteen was a review lesson preparatory to the speechreading examination presented in lesson sixteen.

It was suggested that the television audience study and practice each lesson in the manual at home before a mirror and with the members of their families before viewing the lessons on television.

In order to give the "seeing audience" a feeling of being in the class-

<sup>2</sup>Morkovin, Boris, *The Family Dinner*, Real Life Motion Pictures, University of Southern California, used by permission.

room with the lipreading instructor, two graduate students acted as the "class" and appeared on television with the instructor; as the instructor presented material silently, the students responded aloud. The watching audience was asked to respond aloud with the students as they read the instructor's silently moving lips.

### Staging Techniques

Variety in staging was added at times by superimposure. Thus it was possible to show the instructor in a medium shot in the center of the frame as she presented the silent material. The two students were superimposed on either side of the instructor. By so doing, the viewer was able to see the instructor's questioning and at the same time watch the students' response. A chart stand was placed on the table to the left of the instructor for use with the many signs contained in each program.

### Results

Twenty-nine test papers were sent to the University after the completion of the series of lessons. The following table summarizes the test responses. On the twenty-nine test responses sent in, fifteen individuals reported having no hearing losses, seven said that they had slight losses, three had moderate losses, and four reported severe hearing losses. Six of the fifteen with normal hearing were students in an advanced audiology course who followed the series of television lessons as a part

of their required laboratory work.

Seventy-one possible correct responses could be made to the material presented silently in the test. The testing material consisted of names, common phrases, songs, nursery rhymes, and series of common things that go together. No attempt was made to weigh the values of the responses in the seventy-one possible responses. The range of accurate responses was from twenty-one to sixty-nine. The number of lessons observed ranged from one to sixteen. Ten individuals watched all sixteen of the lessons; five watched fifteen, two followed fourteen lessons, one saw thirteen, two saw twelve, and the rest followed nine or less.

Of the twenty-nine individuals reporting test results, there appeared to be no indication of any special group showing more aptitude in lipreading, according to number of lessons followed, amount of hearing loss reported, or age level.

Twenty-seven of the twenty-nine making responses stated that they would like to see the television lipreading lessons continued. Two made no comment. Several of the observers wrote personal comments on their returned test papers and a few wrote a letter in addition, commenting on the series. Several persons stated that some of the longer parts of the test were given too rapidly toward the close of the period, not allowing time enough after watching to write down the answers. This error may have been responsible for the lowering of the scores in some cases.



### Suggestions to Others

Two other universities thus far have written inquiring about the nature of the televised lipreading course. If the program is repeated or a similar program is to be presented, it may be helpful to suggest certain precautions. In the first place, the time element is very important. A time delay should be made between the presentation of the silently read speech of the instructor and the spoken responses of the students. This will allow for the audience to join in on the responses aloud, or in case of a test, in writing, and will also allow time for camera adjustments.

The print used on the charts and on the revolving drum should be large enough to be read easily. Black print on light grey paper is read easily on television. When the instructor uses the charts, a pointer aids in keeping attention. Sometimes the instructor will wish to read aloud from the charts, in order that those with partial hearing or normal hearing may profit from what they hear. At other times the instructor will wish to speak entirely without sound. Then care must be taken to make the speech movements in complete silence. A whisper often is heard clearly over the microphone. It is also important that the instructor be careful not to exaggerate silent speech movements.

When the lessons are first introduced, it will be helpful to present written material on the drum which will explain the nature of lipread-

ing and tell how the individual may benefit from the study of lipreading.

From this limited experience in teaching lipreading on television, it appears that this medium of instruction can be of benefit to the deaf and hard of hearing. If the experiment were repeated on a larger scale, it is likely that more specific conclusions could be reached.

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## Let's Not By-Pass the Reading Teacher

by LYMAN C. HUNT, JR.

● ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF  
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PENNSYLVANIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

ACCORDING TO *The New York Times*, "Experiments with teaching by television . . . indicate that electronics can not only help solve our school crisis but raise the level of education generally."<sup>1</sup> The school crisis refers, of course, to masses of students. Raising the level of education refers to experiments in "master teaching."

Certainly, the trend in TV experiments is in the direction of the "master teacher" teaching large groups of students by remote control.

### Who is the Master Teacher of Reading?

The tendency to use the "master teacher" approach means that the classroom teacher is by-passed or at best relegated to a stand-by role, good mainly for mop-up operations. Some of us have strong feelings about the use of the "master teacher" for teaching reading. And the strong feelings are largely negative.

It may well be that the "best teacher" can better inform or impart to large student groups knowledge and ideas in most subjects by the medium of television—whether

it be open or closed circuit. But learning to read is much more than following a set of directions or of following the admonitions of a remote control teacher, particularly when he or she is city blocks, or miles away, or merely next door in the TV studio.

Of all the complex tasks with which the child is faced during his school career, mastering the intricacies of the reading process must be placed near the top of the list. Learning to read is a personal matter. Properly, teaching reading to children demands intimate contact between child and teacher. It seems to us that the danger of reducing reading to a process of narrowly conceived mechanical responses exists unless there is constant interaction between teacher and child. Children may not need the opportunity to "talk back" to the teacher, but the opportunity to ask questions must be readily available. It is a situation which demands constant involvement on the part of the teacher.

### What Reading Means

Reading is, in its truest sense, improved living on the child's part, because of ideas he has taken from books. We should persist in our

<sup>1</sup>Charles A. Siepmann, "The Case for TV in Education," *New York Times* (Magazine Section) June 2, 1957, p. 18.

efforts to focus attention on this concept. It should be embodied in our reading programs at all levels. Individualized reading helps to achieve this result.

A trend in the modern reading program toward what has been termed "individualized reading" is a real one and seems to be gaining a great deal of support. It highlights growth on the child's part as a result of his interaction with ideas found in books which he himself has chosen to read. It makes learning to read a creative adventure. It requires skillful guidance of each child's reading program by the teacher. It implies a much closer bond between teacher and child. It increases rather than decreases the teacher's responsibility. It puts more, rather than less, faith in the classroom teacher. The teacher must know the child.

We attempted to get greater individuality in teaching of reading by providing teachers with the opportunity to see other teachers in action. When you see the teacher sitting by the child talking individually with him about his book, you realize that the essence of reading cannot be taught by remote control.

We wanted to help teachers, not by-pass them. We were convinced that teaching teachers, rather than masses of children, was the right choice for us in this exploratory use of closed circuit television.

### **What We Wanted To Do**

We wanted to teach teachers by television. Therefore, the basic purpose of the TV programs was to

help teachers improve their own programs. As a parallel motive we wanted to explore educational TV based on a concept other than teaching by a "master teacher." We were concerned with demonstrating broad, creative aspects of learning rather than in perpetuating a concept of learning which was concerned only with informing and directing. We wanted to find proper uses of educational television when applied to the area of reading.

### **Demonstrating Procedures**

In working with teachers in the field of reading we became sensitive to the fact that seeing is often more effective than hearing about, or reading about, procedures for teaching reading. Teachers always seemed to respond favorably to the opportunity to see teacher-student demonstrations of procedures about which they had learned from class work or from discussions with other teachers.

The saying "One picture is worth a thousand words," while perhaps an overstatement, obviously has some truth in it. While the concept of "Don't preach, demonstrate" can be overdone, it is more often underplayed. And even though there is some of the "master teacher" concept in teaching by demonstration, when a teacher has worked out certain procedures which are particularly successful, one way of sharing them with others is through actual demonstrations. Here the emphasis is on sharing ideas for improved teaching, rather than on shunting the teacher to a secondary position.

An additional purpose, then, for conducting our series of programs was to enable us to compare demonstrations presented by TV with the typical out-of-classroom demonstration. Of course, neither of these approaches can duplicate an extended visit to the teacher's classroom, an opportunity which can be made available to but relatively few persons.

It is a known fact that recent technical developments will enable us, in the not too distant future, to record both the visual and auditory elements of a TV program on magnetic tape. This will permit great flexibility in the use of television for educational purposes. Typical, as well as unusual, classroom programs can be recorded for immediate or future use as the situation may demand.

### **What Did We See?**

As previously indicated, we advocate the type of reading program which emphasizes the creative literature approach in the reading program. This emphasis is distinguishable from the rather sterile basal text approach to reading, which highlights the mechanics and skills involved in the reading process and which is largely teacher directed. The stereotype of the basal approach does not offer much stimulation for programming.

Naturally, then, our programs presented various types of activities associated with the individual approach to reading. Children writing their own material, children sharing

ideas from books which they had selected to read, children using art, dramatic and puppet activities to react to ideas in books, provided the varied and multiform approaches to reading which constituted the main format of our programs.

### **Find Reading Difficulties**

Three of the approximately fifteen programs which have been presented to date have dealt with helping the child who finds reading particularly difficult. In these three programs we have been trying to show ways of determining the exact nature of children's difficulties, various interesting ways of word study, as well as flexible approaches in the use of books and materials with children whose level of resistance to books is high.

The demonstration of activities with children usually consumed forty-five minutes to one hour's time. Teachers from the local area schools, who agreed to present the programs, planned the activities with the TV program director. The programs were not rehearsed. However, adapting activities of the classroom to the limits of a rather small TV studio presented problems which required careful consideration. Freedom of movement in order to focus the cameras on the center of activities, adequate lighting, and properly broadcasting children's responses and extemporaneous remarks were technical problems which had to be handled. Transmitting the voices and proper recording of sound seemed to present the most persistent and aggravating problems.

Because it was impossible to parallel the classroom situation, provision was made for discussion to follow the TV demonstration. This provided the viewing audience with an opportunity to raise questions concerning the program. It, in turn, permitted the teacher to place the activities presented in perspective with her total program. The discussion period was also used to gain appraisal from the audience on the relative merits of TV with the usual type of demonstrations.

### **What Was Learned?**

This series of TV demonstrations was undertaken in a spirit of inquiry. If the basic design was not experimental, it was certainly exploratory. What can be seen on the TV screen that cannot be seen by direct viewing of a demonstration of reading activities? It is likewise important to ask what limits the TV circuit places on the viewer. Some comments will be made on the knowledge gained with respect to producing TV programs of this nature.

### **What Surprised Us**

A word to the unwary teacher who is asked to appear on TV might be in order. Many teachers who have had extensive experience with demonstration teaching often find their first performance on TV to be a strange, if not a harrowing, experience. Batteries of bright lights on warm days make for discomfort. But what is devastating for a teacher's feelings is the uncertainty of not knowing how the audience reacts.

With no indication of how well one is doing, many teachers emerge from the sessions completely washed out, in the emotional sense. There is an urgent need for reassurance. For many teachers, rushing them to meet a live audience of over a hundred teachers seems more like prolonging the agony than a gesture of sympathy. The hand of applause and the comments of satisfaction on the part of the viewers soon restores the needed composure.

Thus the prime requirement for the producer of such programs is to be sufficiently bold to request teacher friends to participate in the TV programs.

### **What Teachers Liked**

Perhaps the advantages of the TV demonstrations can best be presented by enumerating some comments and reactions given by several teachers who viewed the programs.

Some of the comments were as follows:

1. Each teacher had a front seat.
2. Each viewer was able to get a close look at the children and to observe their actions and expressions, as well as to get a closer look at the materials used by the teacher and children.
3. Unlimited numbers of teachers were able to observe at one time.
4. Children and classroom routines were not disrupted by observers sitting around the room.
5. Viewers were all able to see a common picture at the same time, even though there was a constant shift in the focus of the picture to

emphasize the most central action.

6. Viewers received many practical ideas to take back to their own classrooms.

7. Values of individualized reading were clearly evident.

One teacher gave this positive summary: "I believe the use of TV to help improve teaching procedures has definite possibilities." "This would be especially true if it were possible to have the cameras in actual classroom situations. After the teacher and children were accustomed to the cameras and could work naturally, it would be an excellent way in which to observe children learning to live and work together."

### What Teachers Didn't Like

Possibly one disadvantage of the TV medium, though not an obvious one, is that the viewer does not choose what he sees. It may or may not be serious. It may be an advantage that all viewers are seeing the same picture, but all viewers are at the mercy of the program director. The cameras can picture several aspects of the scene at one time and the director, from his front row center seat, selects the picture to be shown. He decides all that the viewer sees. The issue is not whether or not the director's judgments are wise, but rather that the viewer surrenders the right to choose what he sees.

Some lesser disadvantages as summarized by viewers are:

1. The actual climate of the class-

room was not projected as well as in an actual classroom observation.

2. For the most part children seemed natural, but sometimes teachers and children were distracted by the cameras or by the monitor set, and appeared nervous at the beginning. It must be noted that this was the first appearance for most before the lights. It seemed that most children rather quickly become unaware of the technical environment surrounding them.

Sometimes the microphone system appeared to hinder the freedom of movement of both teacher and children. (One teacher said that she felt "tethered.")

Frequently the microphone system failed to render audible responses when the children spoke extemporaneously. These technical difficulties with sound were partly a matter of equipment and would likewise prevail in a demonstration before a very large audience.

### Conclusion

We can best close by quoting these remarks given by one teacher, "The main criticism, as I can see it, to television teaching is the lack of the human relationship factor, in programs in which the *teacher alone* appears on the television program and imparts knowledge. We were fortunate to have a pupil-teacher situation in our series of programs on teaching reading. When teaching becomes a formal process of handing out facts in an electronic dish, then I don't wish to be a part of it."



## Program for Illiterate Adults

(continued from page 32)

completed in mid-February.

On December 6th, this program was awarded the Sylvania Award of Exceptional Merit with the judges making the statement, "The Sylvania Award judges were especially impressed with one educational program which directs itself to a specific regional need and makes ingenious combined use of television and printed material to achieve its purpose. For its program, 'Streamlined Reading' which undertakes to raise the literacy of adults having only an elementary ability to read, the judges have voted a Citation of Exceptional Merit to Station WKNO-TV, Memphis, Tennessee."

### Survey Planned

In the light of the above narrative, WKNO-TV strongly desires to conduct a survey of the actual impact of this program on the community. Specifically it is desired to learn of the students:

- (1) The original economic status of the participants.
- (2) The reasons for inability to

read and write.

(3) The motivation inspiring participation.

(4) The actual achievement of the students—their original capabilities and their capabilities after the completion of the first phase of this project.

(5) Some indications of the effect learning to read and write has had on the participants social and economic status.

(6) Limitations imposed on illiterates by society.

Some of the above may be obtained through standardized testing which has been carried on from the beginning of the project and will be continued throughout and some by case studies.

Generally speaking, the majority of the students had a rural background. They were handicapped by distance from a school, lack of transportation to a school, and the need of their parents for the services the child could render in performing the many duties of farm life.

However, there was a large number of students who were of foreign birth and having come to the U.S.A. after their early childhood had passed they did not enter the public schools of our land, but worked very hard to help their parents make a good living in the new land. Now the time had come when they realized even more than they did when they were younger that reading and writing are very important skills and so they took advantage of the courses offered by WKNO-TV.

### THE ELVA KNIGHT RESEARCH FUND

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# What RESEARCH Says to the Reading Teacher

BY

**AGATHA TOWNSEND**

*Educational Records Bureau*

- KUTZTOWN STATE TEACHERS  
COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA

*Note:* The materials for this issue were collected and annotated by the Committee on Studies and Research of the International Reading Association. In answer to a questionnaire submitted by the Committee to the members of the Association, a large number of research enterprises were described as completed or nearly completed. The materials were summarized by the Committee chairman, Dr. George D. Spache. Several of the studies which have advanced to the stage at which results can be tentatively reported are included here.

These materials will be continued in the next issue. In the forthcoming number, this column will list studies still in progress. Each abstract in the list here includes the name of the author and his address, a very brief description of the study, and an indication of the findings. No research which is reported here had been reported formally in educational journals or other publications at the time that it was summarized for the Committee. This fact should en-

hance the value of this listing which is, in very truth, based on the most modern of investigations.

The studies reported in this issue have to do with: Reading Methods and Materials; Reading Interests; and, Diagnosis and Remedial Teaching.

## **Reading Methods and Materials**

BRANT, SARA. 4522 Indiana Way, La Canada, Calif. To compare individualized approach with circle reading among third grade pupils. Greater enjoyment and more rapid progress seems to be present under the individualized approach.

GRIFFEN, NOVICE LORENE. 14 Loretta Lane, Hicksville, N. Y. Bibliographic analysis of the literature on reading instruction for first graders, and an attempt to formulate a reading program for typical, large, public-school classes.

FRYE, VERA V. Guidance and Curriculum Consultant, Evergreen Park Schools, Evergreen Park, Ill. To explore ways of accelerating growth of reading skills in the sec-

ond grade. Use of new reading materials and projects and flexibility in using reading groups seems to produce greater gains.

KARSTEN, HERBERT C. Holland Elementary School, 17 and Washington Ave., N.E., Minneapolis, Minn. To compare use of the Bond readers with a program using more diversified basal materials. Diversified program better for development of work-study skills; Bond program better for general reading growth and in conservation of teacher's time for preparation. However, emphasis on provision for individual differences produces superior growth regardless of materials used.

VIETS, VIVIAN. Elm Road School, Warren, Ohio. To compare the Laidlaw reading series with other common reading series. Children apparently make more progress with this series.

### Reading Interests

FITTS, MRS. J. W., JR. 8221 Buhman, Rivera, Calif. To increase reading interests of second graders by use of an individualized recreational reading program. Interest in reading, dramatic play, and creative writing appear to be stimulated.

SHURTLEFF, GLADYS. Fabiens Central School, Fabiens, N. Y. To investigate the values of the Library Club of America upon interest in reading in grades four to six. Independent reading seems to be markedly stimulated.

WOLFSON, BERNICE J. Compo Road South, Westport, Conn. Survey of reading interests in grades

three to six and their relationships with other variables. Interests appear to be more closely related to sex and grade than to other factors.

### Diagnosis and Remedial Teaching

BANGS, CLARE. 12023 Centerhill St., Silver Spring, Md. The values of small *vs.* large group reading instruction for retarded ninth graders. Small group instruction seems to promote a more favorable climate for learning.

BONING, THOMAS H. Jr. and Sr. High School, Baldwin, N. Y. To determine the high school non-reader's concepts of the explanations for his failure. Pupils acknowledge that their attitudes toward reading are an important factor; many claim poor instruction as partly accountable.

CLARK, H. M., Vocational School, Kenosha, Wis. To explore the use of mechanical devices in teaching reading to adult evening school students. Interest seems aroused.

CLARK, MAE T. Yancey Hotel, Grand Island, Neb. To investigate the possibilities of helping bright non-achievers. Intensified group and individual work appear profitable.

DOBRIN, RUTH. 231 President St., Passaic, N. J. To find an effective method for teaching non-readers who are apparently hampered by lack of ability to form word associations. Combination method seems to be helpful.

DUBNOFF, BELLE. 4964 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles 27, Calif. Development of teaching materials

for aphasics and low I.Q. children. Materials appear to be somewhat successful with children of extremely low intelligence.

FELD, ELEANOR. P. S. 106, Bronx, N. Y. Using special, small-class program for groups of normally intelligent retarded readers. Individualized teaching, encouragement of creative expression, and semi-monthly parent workshops seem helpful.

FLINTON, DORIS. 23 Albin Rd., Delmar, N. Y. The use of filmstrips as part of a language-arts program for the third grade. Poor readers who appear to be distractible, emotionally disturbed, or easily discouraged are helped.

JAN-TAUSCH, JAMES. Director Reading Clinic, N. J. State Teachers College, Newark, N. J. The effect of limitations in abstract thinking upon reading progress. Tests for possible brain damage indicate that there may be some relationship of these limitations with reading disability.

KESHIAN, JERRY G. 228 Beverly Road, Hempstead, N. Y. Study of the characteristics of poor readers by the case study method. Socio-economic factors seem to influence or be related to reading success.

LIOTTA, ALMA. 17 E. Spring St., Somerville, N. J. The values of specially-scheduled reading instruction for eighth-grade poor readers. Results generally favorable.

MARSHALL, JOSEPHINE. Psychologist and Reading Supervisor, Troy Public Schools, Troy, Ohio. To determine the merits of supplementary reading instruction for poor readers,

Grades 3-6, as given by a floating teacher. Results indicate that 70% of the retarded readers can be improved.

MOSBACH, MARIANNE. 144-44 38th Ave., Flushing 54, N. Y. The relative merits of individual or small group instruction for retarded readers, Grades 7-10. Permissive environment in the group appears to contribute, but individual work is also necessary for maintenance of rapport.

SIONS, C. D. Petersburg Grade School, Petersburg, W. Va. To explore the values of an intensified reading program for retarded readers in a summer camp. Marked growth appeared as a result of the summer training.

TEMPLETON, FLORIEDE. Spalding High School, 1628 W. Washington, Chicago 12, Ill. To explore the values of pupil-centered materials for physically-handicapped high school students who are retarded readers. Reading growth occurred and attitudes toward academic work improved.

TROUT, ELIZABETH. Kenwood Station, Oneida, N. Y. Is attempting remedial work with small groups of migrant children with encouraging results. Careful records are compiled for the use of the next school child will attend.

YODER, HILDA W. Yoder Center, 235 E. 46th St., New York 17, N. Y. Possibilities of producing greater reading growth by promoting physical relaxation among poor readers by means of physiotherapy. Results seem encouraging.

## TV Sends Them! — To The Library

(continued from page 26)

stone, why not read *Music Dictionary* by Davis or *Music Box Book* by Skolsky?" or "If you watch *Medical Horizons* why not read *Wonders of the Human Body* by Ravielli and *What's Inside of Animals* by Zim" or "If you watch sports why not read *100 Greatest Sport Heroes* by Davis or *All American* by Tunis?"

At the South High School in Valley Stream, N. Y., Nicholas Santori, Reading Coordinator, reports a poll he has taken of 1000 students in the school, in which fully 600 say "yes" to the question "Did a TV show ever inspire you to read?"

Thirty-six shows ranging from *Air Power* to *Hall Mark Hall of Fame* to *You Are There* did it, and 187 new titles of books and magazines have come within their lives via the air waves.

These accounts added to many others in the literature lead me to agree, therefore, with Josette Frank (in *Your Child's Reading To-Day*) when she writes "What we have today in TV is not a challenge to reading, but a stimulus toward it. In this day in which pictures and voices animate the printed word, we have an opportunity to develop better educated, better informed, increasingly cultured citizens and more of them than was ever possible in the past."

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## What Other Magazines Say About READING

BY

**MURIEL POTTER LANGMAN**

*Eastern Michigan College*

"Reversals and Reading and Writing Among German and American Children." RALPH C. PRESTON. *Elementary School Journal*, March, 1957. Responses of children entering Grade 1 in Philadelphia and in Munich, Germany, were compared with regard to matching and copying letters. The German children consistently and significantly made more reversal errors. The investigator suggests that the difference may be due to the greater attention given to preparing children for reading in this country.

"Prediction of Reading Success and Reading-Readiness Tests." ROBERT KARLIN. *Elementary English*, May, 1957. The Metropolitan Readiness Test (Reading Section) was used to test 111 children at the beginning of the first grade year. At the end of the year the Gates Primary Test (Type 3, Paragraph Reading) was used to measure their reading achievement. The correlation of raw scores on the two tests was .36. This shows genuine relationship, but is far too low for prediction of reading success. When the influence of chronological age and of intelligence (on an unspecified

test) was controlled, the correlation dropped to .25, barely more than a chance relationship.

"Visual Immaturity and Reading Difficulty." DELWYN G. SCHUBERT. *Elementary English*, May, 1957. The writer points out the relationship between the development of near-point vision in first graders and the demands made upon them in reading from books. If they suffer visual discomfort in attempting to accommodate to print in books they may develop attitudes of dislike for reading which persist through life.

[These facts of visual development may be the factors behind the success of reading programs which employ many far-point activities in teaching beginning reading.

"Kindergarten Training and Grade 1 Reading." IRENE FAST. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, January, 1957. Because accommodations for kindergarten training in a Canadian city were limited in 1953, the investigator was able to compare the success in first-grade reading of two homogeneous groups, one of which had entered first grade after one year of kindergarten, the other without kindergarten training

and having their first school experience in first grade. (Reading was not taught in these kindergartens.) The groups were matched for mental age. The children with kindergarten experience obtained significantly higher scores not only on reading readiness tests given in October in first grade, but on word recognition and paragraph reading tests given in February and on paragraph reading tests given in May of that year.

"Improving Reading Through Listening." EDNA LUE FURNESS. *Elementary English*, May, 1957. Comprehension difficulties are found both in listening and in reading. At the high school level, comprehension of aural material is frequently better than reading comprehension, it is suggested, because tenth grade reading material may be regarded as of twelfth grade listening difficulty. A number of studies of the relationship between listening and reading comprehension are reviewed without uncovering any clear-cut co-variation, but there is agreement that a relationship exists. The writer suggests that reading-listening scores may be useful in the diagnosis of hearing defects, vision defects, and individuals performing below their capacities.

"Interrelationships among Language Variables in Children of First and Second Grades." CLOTILDA WINTER. *Elementary English*, February, 1957. In this study the relationships found were low. The writer discusses the implications of her findings, which are particularly

interesting if read in conjunction with:

"Interrelations of Functional Phonic Knowledge, Reading, Spelling, and Mental Age." MABEL RUDISILL. *Elementary School Journal*, February, 1957. In a group of third grade children in the schools of Durham, N. C., high correlations (around .70) were found between reading and spelling, reading and phonics information, and spelling and phonics knowledge, while correlation of spelling with mental age was .29, of mental age with reading .52, and of mental age with phonics knowledge .42. The mental test used was the Otis Alpha.

"Primary Reading Programs in England and Scotland." DAVID H. RUSSELL. *Elementary School Journal*, May, 1957. Inasmuch as many a careless word has been said about the superiority of European methods of teaching reading, we are delighted to have some objective information about reading instruction abroad. The article's intention is to describe, not to compare.

"Phonics and Spelling." ERNEST HORN. *Elementary School Journal*, May, 1957. This is a monumental study of the variety of spellings for our consonant, vowel and diphthong sounds in English. Consonant sounds are far more consistently spelled than vowels, but in general English spelling is so inconsistent that "There seems no escape from the direct teaching of the large number of common words which do not conform in their spelling to any phonetic or orthographic rule."



## Interesting BOOKS for the Reading Teacher

BY

**HARRY T. HAHN**

*Oakland County Schools, Michigan*

*The Proof of the Pudding: What Children Read* by PHYLLIS FENNER. New York: The John Day Company, 1957. pp. 246. \$3.95

"...if you want children to read, give them books. Buy books, borrow books from the library, surround them with books and read them books, and listen to them talk about books, and talk to them about books. Make books such a part of their lives that they will think of reading like breathing—that is, just accept it as naturally as being alive."

It is evident Phyllis Fenner knows books and she knows children. What is more she knows how to write so that parents and teachers can learn how to bring children and books together.

This wonderful text tells the reader something about the best books of all times, why children like them and approximately how old they are when they read them. It offers many valuable suggestions, such as what books to read aloud to children and the one hundred best books to buy for the home library. She offers considerable help in capturing the interest of a "non-reader."

This would be an excellent book

to discuss at P.T.A. and faculty meetings this fall. Miss Fenner's enthusiasm is contagious.

*Your Children Want to Read* by RUTH TOOZE. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957. \$5.00

Like Phyllis Fenner, Ruth Tooze also recognizes that "Most children want to read; most children will read if books that meet their needs, their interests and their living are easily available. Reading is living."

Parents and teachers will find this book interesting and useful. It is intended to stimulate their thinking and careful analysis of reading in our kind of social order. It provides some specific knowledge of books and authors to meet the needs and interests of growing children.

Mrs. Tooze emphasizes the values, the fun, to be gained from reading and gives good advice on the utilization of television as a motivating factor in children's reading. She indicates the kinds of programs that can serve to encourage and extend children's interests in books.

Mrs. Tooze believes that we have to recognize that reading is something more than a skill.

*Improving Reading Skills in the Junior High School* by L. JANE STEWART, FRIEDA M. HELLER and ELSIE J. ALBERTY. New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts, Inc., 1957. \$.95

This booklet reports on the way a librarian and a core teacher worked together to improve the reading skills of young people in an eighth grade class. Recognizing the wide range of differences in individual reading development, a program for directed reading and study work as well as wide independent reading was devised to provide maximum growth for all. The study shows the value of coordinating the efforts of the librarian with the classroom teacher.

*Effective Reading for College Students* by HOMER L. J. CARTER and DOROTHY J. MCGINNIS, General Editor, NILA BANTON SMITH. New York: The Dryden Press, 1957.

Periodically Homer Carter and Dorothy McGinnis have published materials which they used successfully with college students in their reading and study improvement programs at Western Michigan University. Their latest effort, *EFFECTIVE READING*, is the most readable and possibly the most useful for college reading improvement classes.

As in their previous books, the authors are intent upon helping the student make a thorough self appraisal of all the factors which might effect his academic performance. In the initial chapters, he is encouraged to give serious consideration to

the values of effective reading and to assess his own reading competencies. The remaining sections guide the student to an effective reading method, ways of building his vocabulary, concentration techniques, time budgeting, ideas on rates of reading, finding and organizing information, reading to solve problems, critical reading and finally effective self expression in speaking and writing.

Most of this book's content is devoted to practical procedures rather than to selections to be used for practice purposes. The student is expected to practice in his own textbooks. Obviously this approach has considerable value but it is one that demands individual or group discussion under adequate supervision.

Practically all of the chapters include a section on "Guided Activities" which are designed to be functional in nature. The student is shown different ways to make use of the text's suggestions. Many of the ideas are fresh and interesting.

No reading and study improvement program would be complete without a small library of the many fine related books which have been published during the past ten years. Carter and McGinnis do an excellent job of leading students to additional resources by provocative questions and specific page or chapter references.

They have prepared a very useful text for intensive college level reading and study improvement classes which are growing in popularity and effectiveness.

## THE CLIP SHEET

**NANCY LARRICK**

*Random House, Inc.*

### **More About TV**

*Children and TV, Making the Most of It.* Outstanding educators, familiar with children and TV, present a positive and constructive approach to television and family living, with varied anecdotes of family solutions to TV in their homes. 1954. 40 pages. 75 cents. Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 15th St., N.W., Washington 5, D. C.

*Your Child and Radio, TV, Comics and Movies* by Paul Witty and Harry Bricker. A highly readable 48-page booklet which gives specific information about children's choices, the effects these media have on children, and how parents and teachers can help children build critical judgment. 1952. 48 pages. 60 cents. Science Research Associates, 57 W. Grand Ave., Chicago 10, Ill.

*What Educational TV Offers You* by Jack Mabley, Public Affairs Pamphlet, No. 203. His 28-page booklet discusses in an interesting and informative manner the potentialities of educational TV. 1954. 25 cents. Public Affairs Committee, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

*Comics, TV, Radio and Movies—What Do They Offer Children?* by Josette Frank. Public Affairs

Pamphlet No. 148. This pamphlet contains many helpful suggestions to parents and teachers concerning ways of helping children discriminate between the desirable and undesirable offered by the modern communication agencies, 1955. 25 cents. Public Affairs Committee, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

### **Magazine Articles to Come**

Teachers of reading will be interested in the following magazine articles scheduled for publication in November, 1957:

*Parents' Magazine:* "Who Says Our Children Don't Read?" by Charles G. Spiegler.

*Parents' Magazine:* "Children's Books and Television" by Elizabeth W. Koenig. A list of television programs popular with children and the children's books that can be introduced through each one.

*Junior Natural History:* "Children's Books in the Science Field" by Glenn O. Blough. This article and the books listed will be related to the program of the International Geophysical Year.

### **Book Lists and Guides to Book Selection**

*Aids to Choosing Books for Your Children*, compiled by Alice Dal-

gliesh and Annis Duff. A valuable leaflet which gives sources of reviews of children's books, names of authoritative book lists, and titles of recommended books about children's reading. Single copies free on request with stamped self-addressed envelope from the Children's Book Council, 50 W. 53rd Street, New York 19, N. Y. Quantity price, 50 copies for \$1.00.

*Book Bait* by Elinor Walker gives detailed notes on nearly 100 adult books popular with teen-agers. This is the nucleus of a working collection of books for young people with much useful material to help teachers and librarians introduce the titles that will catch and hold teen-age interest. 96 pages, paperbound. American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, Ill. Price: \$1.25.

*Growing Up With Books*, 1957 Edition (3 in. x 5 in.), is a handy list of 200 books for children with annotations and illustrations. Titles are grouped by age level and subject. These are books selected by librarians and booksellers as the ones that children enjoy. An excellent book list to distribute to parents in your school. R. R. Bowker Co., 62 W. 45th St., New York 36. Price \$3.35 per 100 without imprint of school name; \$4.40 per 100 with imprint.

*Books to Build On*, Second Edition. This 80-page paperbound book gives practical suggestions for selecting and purchasing books for school libraries in elementary, junior high and high school. Specific lists are given with suggestions on how to

spend \$750, \$1000, or \$1500 on books for the school library. R. R. Bowker Co., 62 W. 45th St., New York 36, N. Y. Price: \$2.00.

### **Book Week, November 17-23, 1957**

"Explore With Books" is the theme for Children's Book Week this year. Available materials: A full-color poster by the Provencens (size 17 in. x 22 in., price 35 cents each); bookmarks carrying a miniature reproduction of the poster in full color (size 2 in. x 7 in., price 500 for \$2.50); and three streamers (size 22½ in. x 6 in., price 30 cents for set of three) by leading illustrators of children's books. All are very gay and attractive and will add interest in many spots in the school library. Children's Book Council, 50 W. 53rd St., New York 19, N. Y.

For a list of additional Book Week materials, write to the Children's Book Council, 50 W. 53rd Street, New York 19, N. Y.

### **If You Want to Run a Book Fair**

*Book Bazaar Packet* includes a play or radio script based on a children's book, book jackets, poster, 4-page bulletin on how to choose encyclopedias and dictionaries, and a 32-page manual, "Bigger and Better Book Bazaars." \$2.00 from Scholastic Magazines, 33 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

*How to Run a Book Fair* by Dorothy McFadden. Practical suggestions illustrated with photographs. Children's Book Council, 50 West 53rd Street, New York 19. Price, 75 cents.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY ALBERT J. HARRIS

THE SECOND YEAR of the International Reading Association has been one of very rapid growth, with both the satisfactions and the problems that accompany quick change. Under the very capable leadership of William S. Gray and Nancy Larrick, our first and second presidents, membership had increased by June, 1957, to around 8,900, 80 per cent over the combined membership of the two parent organizations at the time of the merger on January 1, 1956.

An immediate consequence was to put a great strain on our central office. Dr. Donald L. Cleland had been Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction since 1951, and of IRA since its beginning. He had carried this load in addition to his full-time responsibilities as a senior professor at the University of Pittsburgh, and with a minimum of clerical help. It became evident that an organization with a membership nearing 10,000 and a growing program of activities needed an executive who could devote at least half time to the work, as well as an enlarged clerical staff.

We have been fortunate in securing Dr. James M. McCallister as our new Executive Secretary-

Treasurer. Dr. McCallister is both an acknowledged expert in the field of reading and an experienced administrator, having been Dean of a Chicago City Junior College for many years. He and his staff now occupy office space at 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois, in quarters supplied by the University of Chicago. We expect that by the time this issue appears, the new office will be operating efficiently. Dr. McCallister has a very capable Advisory Committee of which Dr. William S. Gray is chairman.

In making this change we wish to acknowledge our great indebtedness to Dr. Cleland, who for years carried a heavy burden with minimum budgetary allotments and at considerable personal sacrifice. In token of this, a Citation of Merit was awarded to him at the Annual Conference in May, 1957. We are glad that Dr. Cleland will continue as our resident agent in Pennsylvania, the state in which we are incorporated.

We also wish to express our gratitude to the University of Pittsburgh for assistance to ICIRI and IRA over many years, including rent-free office space and many other types of help. And we should not forget Dr. Gerald A. Yoakam, who as president of ICIRI in 1950-51, was initially



responsible for all of the invaluable help we received from Dr. Cleland and the University of Pittsburgh.

### **Dues Raised to \$3.50**

The former membership dues of only \$2.50 a year were clearly inadequate to support the printing of a high-class magazine, enlarge and improve the central office, and support an expanding program of activities and services. Accordingly, the Assembly voted on May 10, 1957, to increase annual dues to \$3.50 a year. This is still a very low figure, and entitles a member not only to voting privileges and a subscription to *THE READING TEACHER*, but also to a substantial saving in the registration fee for the Annual Conference.

In April, 1957, Dr. J. Allen Figurel notified us that his health would not allow him to continue as Editor of *THE READING TEACHER*. Dr. Figurel served very ably as Editor for three years, and had the satisfaction of seeing the print order increase from 4,000 copies to 14,000 copies per issue, mainly because of the excellence of the magazine. Dr. Figurel had already been invited to continue as Editor, and we greatly regret his inability to do so. The Publications Committee, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Nila Banton Smith, has kindly consented to act as editor on a temporary basis while a careful search for a new editor is being conducted.

The nearly 3,000 people who attended the Second Annual Conference in New York on May 10 and

11, 1957, do not need to be told that it was an outstanding success in every way. A remarkably fine program involving almost 150 speakers and program participants was arranged by Dr. Nancy Larrick and her Program Committee. The smooth operation of the conference depended on the efforts of nearly 180 volunteers who helped efficiently and courteously in the local arrangements.

Our Organization Chairman, Mary Austin, and Associate Chairman for Canada, Clare Routley, had a very busy and successful year. We now have about 90 fully affiliated councils, and many others in process of organization. Questions concerning the roles of intermediate and local councils arose, and several of the new by-laws are intended to clear up these difficulties. We hope this year to launch a campaign to increase overseas membership. We are truly an international organization, with 12 per cent of our membership in Canada.

Although the meetings of your Board of Directors involve long days of hard work, and hundreds of miles of travel, good attendance is the rule. We welcome as new directors David H. Russell and Dorothy Lampard, and are sure that they will bring added wisdom as well as wider geographical coverage to our Board.

The International Reading Association exists to serve you, its members. If you have any suggestions about ways we can improve our program and operations, we shall be very glad to hear from you.



## COUNCIL NEWS

**MARY C. AUSTIN**

Harvard University

Local and Intermediate Councils are requested to send *advance* news of their meetings and plans to Dr. Mary C. Austin, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, Lawrence Hall, Kirkland Street, Cambridge 38, Massachusetts.

As this column goes to press in August, 96 Local and Intermediate Councils have completed formal affiliation with the International Reading Association during the past year and one-half — an average of more than five councils each month. A special welcome is extended to ten councils whose By-laws and charter applications have been approved by the Organization Committee since the Second Annual Assembly in May:

### **California:**

BAY AREA READING COUNCIL OF SAN FRANCISCO, OAKLAND AND PENINSULA, CALIF., Harrison Bullock, 354 Quintara St., San Francisco 16, Calif.

REGIONAL READING COUNCIL, (LONG BEACH, CALIF.), Laurance L. Hill, 6448 Los Santos Drive, Long Beach 15, Calif.

SAN FRANCISCO - BAY COUNCIL, Sister Eileen Marie, 3500 Mountain Blvd., Oakland, Calif.

### **Louisiana:**

NORTH LOUISIANA READING AS-

SOCIATION, Dr. William J. Massey, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, A. E. Phillips School, Ruston, Louisiana.

### **Maryland:**

SOUTHERN MARYLAND READING CLUB, Bertha W. Key, Bryan's Road, Maryland.

### **Montana:**

MIDLAND EMPIRE READING COUNCIL, Miss Margaret Bontz, 1336 19th St., West Billings, Montana.

### **Ohio:**

MAHONING VALLEY COUNCIL, Miss Thelma Wildpret, 24 Overlook Blvd., Struthers, Ohio.

### **Texas:**

BEXAR COUNTY READING ASSOC., Mr. E. E. Arnaud, 419 University Ave., San Antonio, Texas.

LAMAR READING COUNCIL, Mr. H. L. Irsfeld, 1505 N. W. 5th Ave., Mineral Wells, Texas.

MID-TEXAS READING COUNCIL, Mrs. Billie Bolin, 2105 W. Ave. K, San Angelo, Texas.

### **Organization Committee**

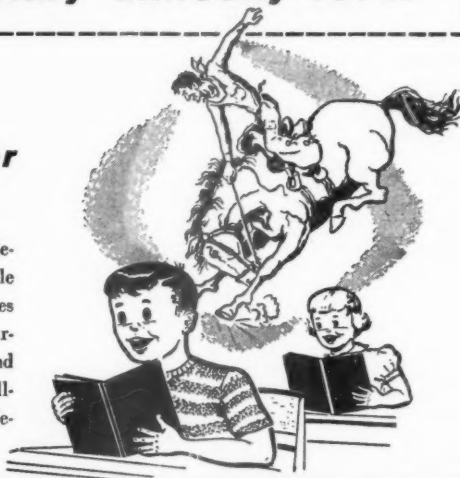
Information about how Local and Intermediate Councils may be started can be obtained by writing to the Chairman of the Organization Committee. Canadian inquiries



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Cowboy Sam and the Fair .....	Grade 2	1.52
Cowboy Sam and the Rodeo .....	Grade 2	1.52
Cowboy Sam and the Indians .....	Grade 3	1.68
Cowboy Sam and the Rustlers .....	Grade 3	1.68

### THE JERRY BOOKS

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Jerry Goes on a Picnic .....	Grade 2	1.60
Jerry Goes to the Circus .....	Grade 3	1.68

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Bucky Button .....	Primer	1.32
The Buttons Take a Boat Ride .....	Primer	1.36
The Buttons and the Pet Parade .....	Primer	1.36
The Buttons at the Farm .....	Grade 1	1.40
The Buttons Go Camping .....	Grade 2	1.60
Buttons at the Soap Box Derby .....	Grade 3	1.90

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should be addressed to the Associate Chairman in Ontario, Canada.

You are also invited to discuss plans and problems with members of the Organization Committee whose names and addresses appear below:

*Chairman:* Dr. Mary C. Austin, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, Lawrence Hall, Kirkland St., Cambridge 38, Mass.

*Associate Chairman:* Mr. C. B. Routley, Asst. Supt. of Schools, Dept. of Education, Province of Ontario, Queens Park, Toronto 5, Ontario, Canada.

Dr. Bernard Belden, Asst. Prof. of Education, State Teachers College, Chico, Calif.

Dr. Emery Bliesmer, University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

Dr. Morton Botel, 31 Mulberry Lane, Levittown, Pa.

Dr. Carl F. Brown, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C.

Dr. Theodore Clymer, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14, Minn.

Dr. Mary Coleman, George Washington University, 802 21st St., N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Mr. Robert Hall, Manter Hall School, 71 Mount Auburn St., Cambridge 38, Mass.

Dr. Selma Herr, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Calif.

Dr. Ralph House, Northeast Missouri State Teachers College, Kirksville, Mo.

Miss Dorothy Lampard, Faculty of Education, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Dr. Wendell Lanton, Department of Psychology, Chicago Teachers College, 6800 Stewart Ave., Chicago 21, Ill.

Dr. George Manolakes, New York University, School of Education, Washington Square, New York 3, N. Y.

Dr. Robert Ridgway, Director of Elementary Education, University of Kansas, School of Education, Lawrence, Kan.

Dr. Max Siegel, Brooklyn College, Community Counseling Center, Bedford Ave. and Avenue H, Brooklyn 10, N. Y.

Mrs. Elizabeth Simpson, 5514 South Woodlawn Ave., Chicago 37, Ill.

Miss Ruth Solomon, Albany Study Center for Learning Disabilities, Albany Hospital, New Scotland Ave., Albany 8, N. Y.

Dr. Ralph Staiger, Division of Education and Psychology, Mississippi Southern College, Hattiesburg, Miss.

Dr. LaVerne Strong, Connecticut State Department of Education, Hartford, Conn.

Dr. Gertrude Williams, District of Columbia Teachers College, Miner Bldg., Washington 1, D. C.

Dr. Nancy Young, Bureau of Curriculum Research, 130 W. 55th St., New York, N. Y.

### **Canadian Meetings**

The *Vancouver Council* which was formed last fall held six meetings during the year devoted to the teaching of reading in today's schools. Four meetings centered

about the teaching of primary reading and two were directed toward intermediate reading procedures.

In the fall of 1957 the council will study reading programs in the secondary schools with the assistance of specialists in their own school system who will speak to them and answer questions about current practices.

### **Hawaiian Council**

The *Ka Hui Heluhelu* Council of Honolulu was fortunate in having Dr. Linus Pauling, Jr., an outstanding psychiatrist in Honolulu, speak on the topic "Ways Personality is Developed." Practical emphasis was placed upon guiding and working with children in the classroom.

Officers for the year 1957-58 are: Dr. Lawrence Kasdon, reelected President; Miss Victoria Takemoto, Vice-President; Mrs. Hanae Miyasato, Treasurer; and Mrs. Grace T. Berg, Secretary.

### **Meetings in the United States**

The *McLean County-ISNU Reading Council* held a reading workshop in May at the Illinois State Normal University based on the theme: Better Citizens Through Reading. The keynote address was presented by C. H. Pygman, Superintendent of Schools, Maywood, Illinois. Special sectional meetings with teacher-speakers and consultants were held for those interested in the primary, intermediate, junior and senior high, levels, or in remedial teaching of the teaching of the gifted.

The *West Suburban Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction* in Illinois planned four meetings for the past year with general topic centers on the Slow-learner, the Able-learner, and Special Education.

Dr. Robert W. Ridgway, Director of Elementary Education at the University of Kansas, announces that final arrangements for the IRA Conference to be held in Lawrence on October 12 have been completed.

"Thinking and Related Aspects of Comprehension" provided the theme of the *Southern Maryland Reading Club's* Institute in April at Fairmont Park. The Institute was sponsored by the Maryland State Teacher's College at Bowie, Maryland. Dr. Alvin W. Schindler, Professor of Education at the University of Maryland, spoke on the Institute theme.

Congratulations are extended to the *Minnesota Intermediate Reading Association* for its excellent News Letter published throughout the year under the editorship of Brother Leonard Courtney of Saint Mary's College, Winona.

The *Central Nebraska Regional Council* of IRA will meet in Kearney, Saturday, October 12. The meeting will consider "How Can We Insure Maximum Growth of Bright Children?"

The *Southern New England Intermediate Council* held its summer meeting in conjunction with the Third Annual Conference on Reading and the Language Arts at the University of Rhode Island in July.

## Highlights of the May Conference

by JACK LIPPETT

● MANAGING EDITOR  
SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES

**A**TTRACTED BY A PROGRAM timely and specific in its appeal to those interested in the teaching of reading, and the development of interest in reading, 2900 teachers, supervisors, administrators, publishers, and others attended the Second Annual Conference of the International Reading Association in the Hotel New Yorker and the adjacent Manhattan Center, in New York City, Friday and Saturday, May 10 and 11.

Probably never before have so many high-level reading experts been corralled under one roof (in this case, two). The list of 147 speakers and discussants comprised a roll call of outstanding authorities in the field, from the United States and Canada. A disinterested observer, strolling about the corridors between sessions, could readily detect the enthusiasm of all present. The air seemed charged with thought-waves signaling "What an opportunity!" And so it proved to be, after two tightly packed days of a program that only a past-master of conference planning could have contrived.

Unmistakable signs of a rewarding experience were the comments of the registrants, their lively participation in the discussion periods, and their eagerness to remain until the last word. Even the hundreds of regis-

trants who were unable to obtain places at the Saturday luncheon session on "Creating Books for Children" were swiftly lifted out of their gloom by the action of the Arrangements Committee in setting up an overflow meeting in the hotel's second largest room. Here, in spell-bound silence, they sat in every nook and corner, on stairs and floor, listening to book authors and illustrators May McNeer, Lynd Ward, Catherine Peare, and Marguerite de Angeli give deeply moving accounts of their work and aspirations. The speakers' voices were being carried by loud-speaker relay from the main ballroom where nearly one thousand were seated at the luncheon tables.

Registration exceeded the estimates of the most optimistic committeemen. On the opening morning, registration was so heavy that only the fast maneuvering of Convention Manager Albert J. Harris and his competent associates avoided long delays in issuing admission credentials to the Friday morning arrivals. The opening of the first general session, scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Friday, was held up 20 minutes to accommodate those delayed in the registration queue.

Lester Asheim, dean of the Graduate Library School, University of Chicago, and Irving Lorge, Teachers College, Columbia University,

made the principal addresses at the opening session in Manhattan Center.

They were introduced by I.R.A. President Nancy Larrick, who in her introductory speech expanded on the convention theme "Reading in Action," explaining "By this we mean reading as it is related to doing and thinking and living; we mean reading that is a vibrant part of today's world; we mean reading that brings personal satisfaction to the reader because it is attuned to his needs and to the rhythm of the times."

Dr. Larrick's address, and those by Dr. Lorge, Dr. Asheim, and other speakers and discussants, are included in the printed proceedings of the conference, under the title *Reading in Action*, and published

by Scholastic Magazines, 33 West 42nd St., New York 36, N. Y. (\$2 per copy).

The conference received a good press in the U.S. and Canada, including a *New York Times* editorial "Eager Young Readers" (issue of June 11, 1957). This editorial took its cue from Dean Asheim's observation that more people are reading now, in sheer numbers, than at any time in history . . . "although the number of readers may be greater, the proportion — all things considered — is not. There were never so many people before, and the proportion of them who read is disappointingly small. Disappointingly because never before have the conditions for reading been so favorable."

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*of the*  
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Look for more details and registration instructions  
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## I.R.A. CO-OPERATIVE PROGRAMS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

FALL 1957

*National Council of Teachers of English*

1957 Program, Friday, November 25  
Roosevelt Hotel, Minneapolis, Minn.

### **MAINTAINING GROWTH IN READING POWER**

*Chairman:* Nila B. Smith, New York University

*Speakers:* David Russell, University of California, "Maintaining Growth in the Elementary School"  
Guy Bond, University of Minnesota, "Maintaining Growth in the Junior High School"  
Gertrude Callahan, Weston, Massachusetts, High School, "Maintaining Growth in the Senior High School"  
Russell B. Cospers, Purdue University, "Maintaining Growth in College"

*Discussants:* Jane Alexander, Ernie Pyle Junior High School, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Leone Cummings, Annie Wright Seminary, Tacoma, Wash.  
Theodore Harris, University of Wisconsin  
Helen K. Smith, Niles Township High School, Skokie, Illinois

*Education Records Bureau in Conjunction with  
American Council on Education*

1957 Program, Friday, November 1  
Roosevelt Hotel, New York

### **PLANNING TO ASSURE READING SKILLS FOR ALL STUDENTS**

*Chairman:* Mark A. Neville, Latin School of Chicago

*Speaker:* Dr. Albert J. Harris, Queens College, New York

*Discussants:* Nancy Larrick, Random House, Inc., New York  
Lawrence C. Lightner, Director, Salisbury Summer School, Salisbury, Conn.  
Philip B. Shaw, Brooklyn College, New York  
Linda C. Smith, Betts Reading Clinic, Haverford, Pennsylvania

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## *Important 1957 Publications*

### **READING DIFFICULTIES: THEIR DIAGNOSIS AND CORRECTION**

By GUY L. BOND and MILES A. TINKER. Specific diagnostic and correctional procedures for a wide variety of reading difficulties are described in this book. Based on experimental findings and sound classroom procedures, the text provides numerous illustrative exercises and case histories. \$5.25

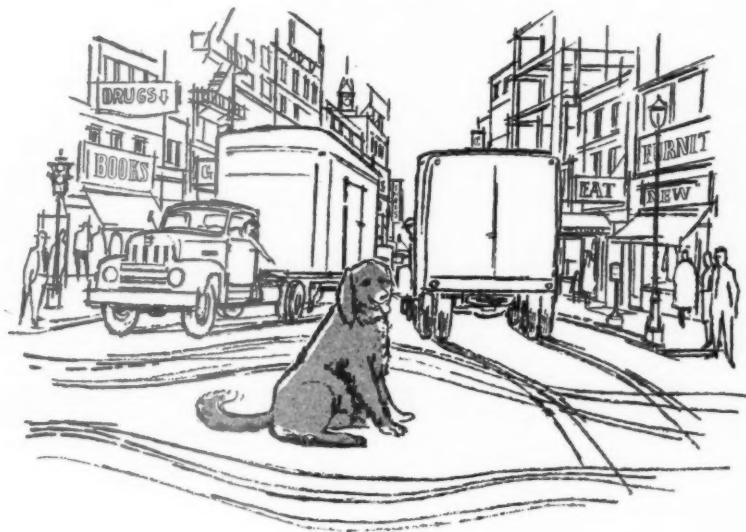
### **IMPROVING READING IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

By L. JANE STEWART, FRIEDA M. HELLER, and ELSIE J. ALBERTY. The first volume in a new series, *Appleton-Century-Crofts Current Problems in Education*, this monograph presents an account of how a core teacher and a librarian worked together to improve the reading ability of eighth-grade pupils. \$95

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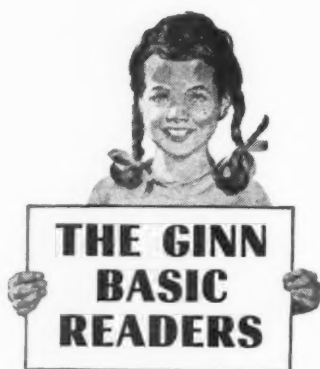
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Enlarged, reset in a new format, this is a text for graduate courses in developmental and remedial reading—for undergraduate methods courses—for the classroom teacher—for the reading clinician. It contains different points of view, practical applications with specific materials, and, in the appendices, a list of tests, graded lists of books for retarded readers, and a list of publishers of useful materials.

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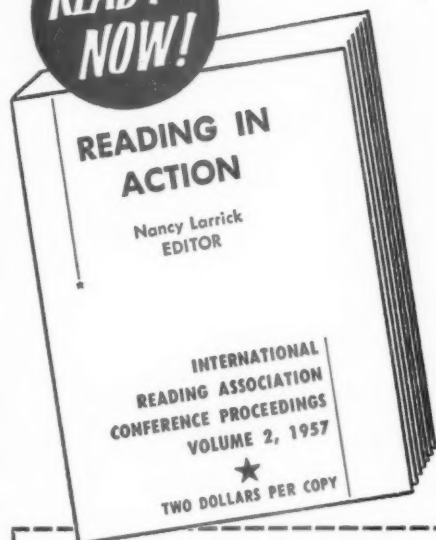
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